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How to rig an election: The many faces of voter suppression.

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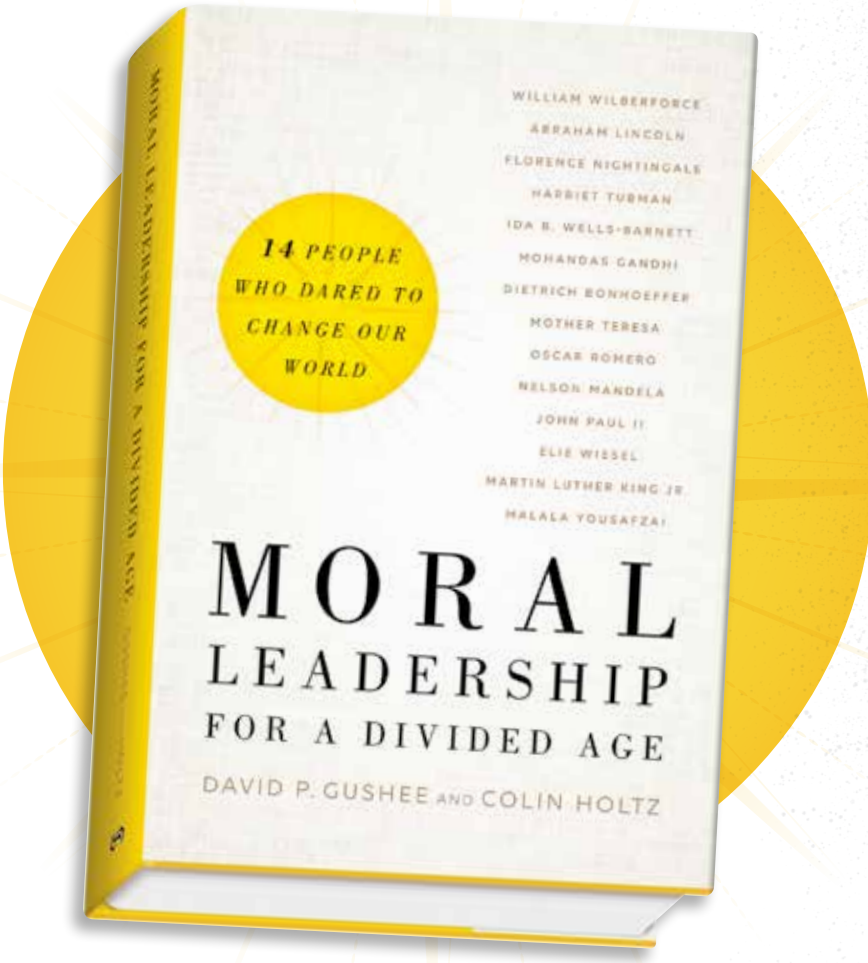

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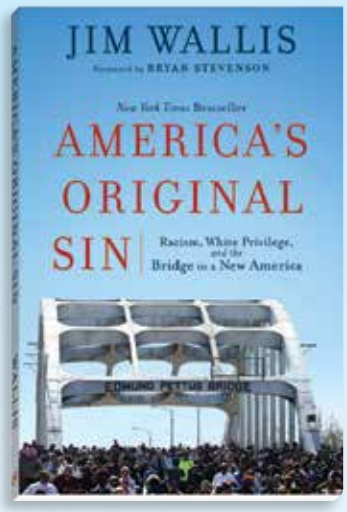

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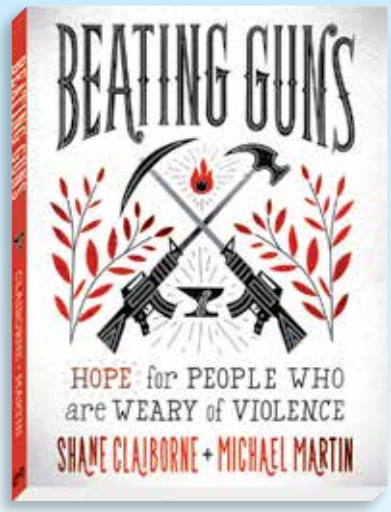

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HOW MANY WAYS can you say "resist"? In recent issues, we've urged people of faith to "challenge," "subvert," and "defy" the leaders and systems that run counter to Jesus' message of abundance, inclusion, and love. We've shared stories of faith-fueled ways to "protest, "persist," and "persevere." And on more than one occasion, we've indulged in the old prophetic standby: "Speak truth to power."

But the best synonyms for "resist" aren't in a thesaurus. They're words like "organize," "accompany," and, as we explore in this issue, "vote." "Voting is simply the easiest part of the whole process for making positive change," explains Randy Woodley. We agree: Voting *should* be easy, though as Carol Anderson explains in "It's Not Just the Russians," some officials are intentionally restricting voting access, especially for people of color. So don't be tempted to think your vote is meaningless; it's the very power of voting that such efforts seek to curtail. If you read nothing else in this issue, read this: Check your local voting guidelines and ensure you cast your ballot on Nov. 6.

Yet resistance comes in many forms, so don't stop there. Be creative: For Tevyn East and the members of Holy Fool Arts, upending a culture of domination involves face paint, puppets, and stilts. Each summer, the troupe hosts the Carnival de Resistance, a monthlong residency drawing on the global carnival traditions of communal participation, celebration, play, and mockery of power structures. "I felt old addictions and patterns of thought—that my body is not precious, that I should be ashamed of my heritage, that spending money makes me feel better—begin to loosen," explained Carnival crew member Grace Aheron. "The empire has walls built around and within us; I am grateful for the way in which Carnival invites us to topple all those walls—and invites the Holy One to fill the spaces between." ■

Letters

I am neither a 'Trump-vangelical' nor a union 'thug.'

For Faith and Union

Thank you for "Make Unions Great Again," by Tony Campolo (September-October 2018), a wonderful article that advocates for Christians to support unions. As a full-time staff member for the teachers' union in Los Angeles and a woman of faith, I find the bias about Christians working in unions goes both ways. My colleagues lump me with the "Trump-vangelicals" and my Christian friends view me as a union "thug." I am neither. I'm committed to bringing about "expressions of God's kingdom" by working toward better worker rights for my members and excellent schools for all students, not just the wealthy. I will share Campolo's article with my colleagues, union members, and councils.

Kim McLaughlin
Burbank, California

Who Will Care?

Bless you, Jemar Tisby and *Sojourners*, for "The Most Powerful People in the System" (August 2018). The role that prosecutors play as the feeding tube for the prison-industrial complex has been overlooked for too long. I'm a chaplain at a homeless shelter. While accompanying the shelter's guests to court appearances, I've witnessed firsthand prosecutors charging poor people with a crime more serious than the one they're guilty of, because the prosecutors can, and who will care if one more homeless person is taken off the streets and shipped away to prison? Well, I care. Good people are being victimized to increase conviction rates and feed political ambitions. This is nothing short of human sacrifice, and it's wrong.

Rob Cairns
Nevada City, California

Christian Indictments

Danny Duncan Collum's recent critique of Rob Bell ("Individualism Wins," August 2018) is weak. What appears to bother Collum most about Rob Bell is that Bell has many non-Christian fans, to which I say, "Really?" If you want someone speaking truths that only appeal to what Collum calls "orthodox" Christianity, then you will find yourself in an echo chamber. Collum's piece reeks of the "I'm-against-Rob-Bell-because-it-makes-me-look-more-like-a-real-Christian" indictments that abound in fundamentalist Christian circles.

Brian Knox
Mauldin, South Carolina

Solidarity and Interdependence

Danny Duncan Collum's column "Individualism Wins" is interesting. I, too, had not followed the evolution of Rob Bell's message, and I can see Collum's conclusion that it may be more American than Christian. As a recently retired pastor in the United Methodist Church, I am watching yet another mainline denomination—a "big, broad" institution—face the prospect of splitting. When I look around my United Methodist family, I see little diversity, yet I am unconvinced that diversity would lead us to holy "solidarity and interdependence." Perhaps even within this institution, too many of us have clumped "into self-selected tribes of 'people like us.'"

Deborah Rose
West Wyoming, Pennsylvania

Correction: The September-October 2018 article "Make Unions Great Again," by Tony Campolo, stated that "81 percent of evangelicals" voted for Donald Trump. Eighty-one percent of white evangelicals voted for Trump.

Kudos! (or Brickbats!) *Write to letters@sojo.net or Letters, Sojourners, 408 C Street NE, Washington, DC 20002. Include your name, city, and state. Letters may be edited.*

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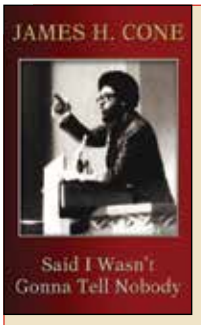

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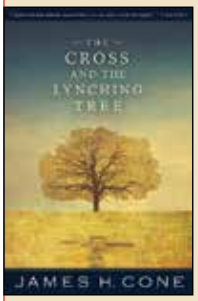

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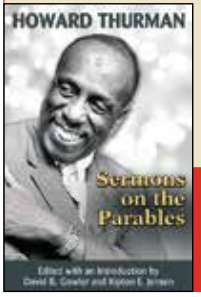

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BY JIM WALLIS

A Political Emergency, and Worse

THE REVELATIONS AT the end of the summer from journalist Bob Woodward and from the anonymous administration official writing in *The New York Times* provided more evidence, as if more were needed, of the unhinged, immoral, chaotic, and deeply corrupt nature of the president and his administration. They also underscored the absolute necessity of creating and bolstering whatever checks and balances are possible to this administration's power—not merely because of political exigency, which is dire enough to fairly name it as a constitutional crisis, but because the integrity of our faith is at stake as well.

While I'm convinced that the very soul of our nation is under threat by this administration and its actions, it's not just policy or even character issues per se that have brought us to this point—as important as they are. Those issues include racial bigotry that overtly denies the image of God in all people; the denial and destruction of truth itself; a reversal of Jesus' leadership values of service over domination; our unity in Christ as opposed to oppression based on race, gender, and class; whether we put "America first" or affirm the global character of our faith and relationships; and the real danger of growing autocracy and authoritarian rule over our democracy.

The moral corruption of this administration is staggering.

The moral corruption of this administration is staggering and presents increasing danger to the health of our society and the institutional balances of our republic. On top of all that, because of the Faustian bargain he has made with many white evangelicals, the Trump era has also created a defining moment for people of faith, not only a constitutional crisis but also a crisis of conscience. For Christians, that raises the stakes even beyond what they would be if this were "only" about a political catastrophe.

I AM HARDLY alone in asserting that the stakes are this high. Many conservatives who are usually dependably Republican have warned that the checks and balances built into our system of government simply aren't working, and that this is a critical moment for our country.

For instance, the fiercely conservative columnist George Will wrote about what he sees as a constitutional crisis: "The congressional Republican caucuses must be substantially reduced," Will wrote. "So substantially that their remnants, reduced to minorities, will be stripped of the Constitution's Article I powers that they have been too invertebrate to use against the current wielder of Article II powers. ... And to those who say, 'But the judges, the judges!' the answer is: Article III institutions are not more important than those of Articles I and II combined."

These are remarkable sentiments coming from such a staunch and consistent conservative as Will. Few conservatives have actually advocated the defeat of their party at the congressional level, not the least because of the importance they place on a conservative judiciary. Will is saying that judicial preferences do not outweigh the need to have limits on the dangerous excesses of this president.

Michael Gerson, a former speechwriter for George W. Bush, put the stakes in even starker moral terms. He wrote:

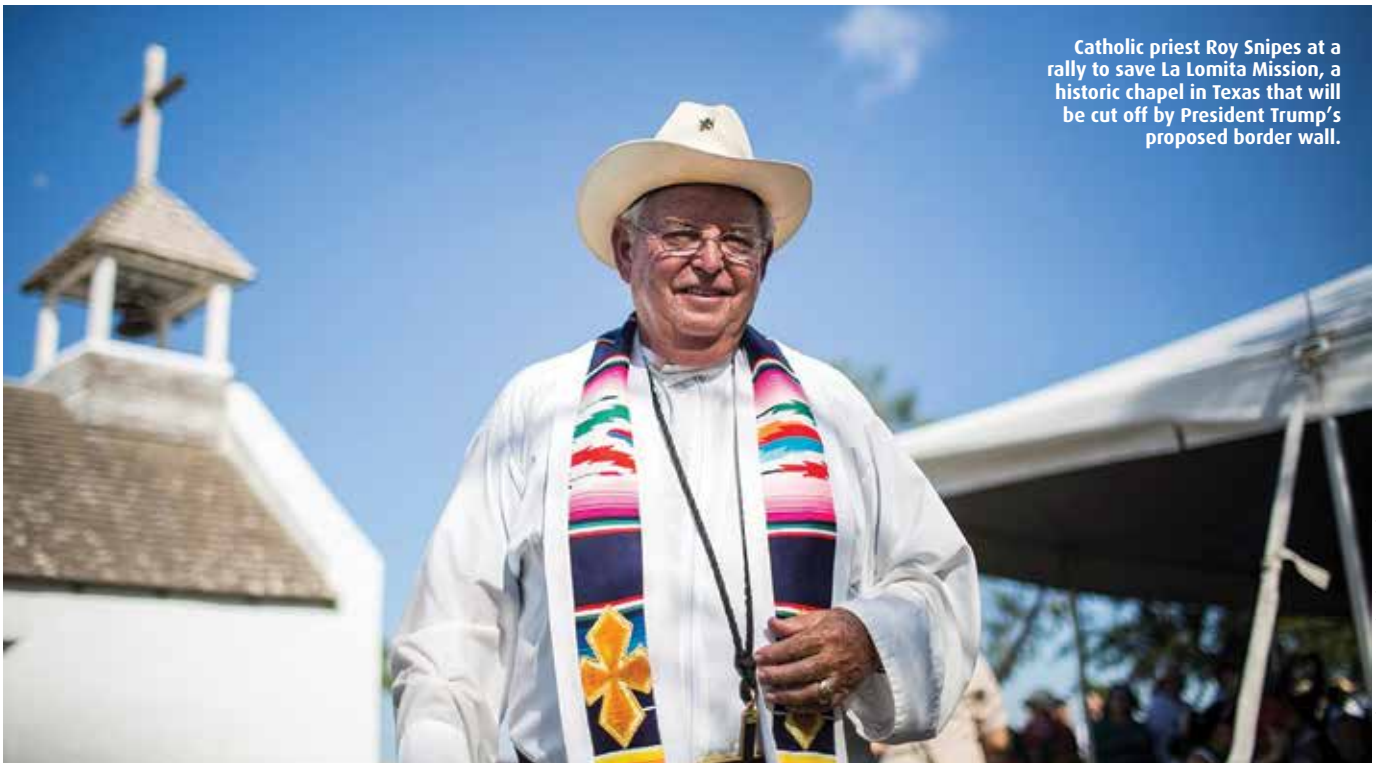
American politics is in the midst of an emergency. ... If Republicans retain control of the House in November, Trump will (correctly) claim victory and vindication ... And he will gain many more enablers and imitators ... The possible outcomes this November come down to this: Trump contained, or Trump triumphant ... In this case, a Republican vote for a Democratic representative will be an act of conscience.

These are not indictments that either Will or Gerson make lightly. But it has become increasingly clear that Trump has engaged in criminal, and unconstitutional, behavior. He is a self-interested man instead of a public servant, one who regards nothing as larger than himself—even the country he was elected to serve. He is actively contemplating plunging the country into a constitutional crisis to avoid accountability and to retain his personal hold on power.

President Trump's base of white voters, in their fearful and sometimes hateful backlash to American multicultural diversity, supports virtually everything Trump does. Afraid of changing demographics, their core white nationalism could effectively spell the end of democracy in this country, or at least will be its severest test in the days ahead.

With the rule of law, the importance of truth, the nature of leadership, social equity and equality, and the threat of autocracy over democracy now all at stake, we cannot squander any opportunity to genuinely check this president's frightening power—to hold Trump accountable to the law, to freedom of the press, and to constitutional government, and to protect the most vulnerable people from the president himself. ■

***Jim Wallis** is editor-in-chief of* Sojourners *magazine.*



Catholic priest Roy Snipes at a rally to save La Lomita Mission, a historic chapel in Texas that will be cut off by President Trump's proposed border wall.

Martin do Nascimento for *The Texas Tribune*

By Sandi Villarreal

'No Wall Between Amigos'

The crisis continues at the U.S.-Mexico border.

A SMALL WHITE CHAPEL sits just a couple hundred yards north of the Rio Grande river in Mission, Texas. While the chapel no longer hosts an active parish, its interior shows signs of frequent use. Prayer candles and silk flowers line the altar and the base of a shrine to Our Lady of Guadalupe. An entryway table holds dozens of prayers, written on folded loose-leaf paper. Children's composition notebooks, filled with more handwritten prayers, are stacked in piles.

"Please watch over our brothers, sisters, and all the children being held hostage at the border," one prayer says. And another: "Please bless our health & the children being separated from their parents @ the border."

La Lomita Chapel is now part of a municipal park and serves as a rest stop for passersby—while Border Patrol trucks sit just outside the park entrance and a helicopter circles overhead. The chapel land was originally granted to Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate priests in the mid-1800s. Given its location—midway between mission centers in Brownsville and Roma, Texas—La Lomita served as a meeting place and "housed transient visitors to the mission," according to a historic marker on the site.

I visited the chapel, quite by accident, during a reporting trip at the border at the height of the family separation crisis. The separation of parents and children moved the hearts—and wallets—of people across the nation. But that fervor waned after a U.S. District Court judge gave a July deadline for reunification and more than 1,500 children were reunited with their parents, largely thanks to the efforts of faith groups and advocates. For many, it seemed, the story was over. The reality is that the crisis continues.

> "Please watch over all the children held hostage at the border."

As of this writing, 497 children remain separated from their parents, 22 of whom are under the age of 5. More than 300 parents have been deported, and many who signed a waiver to be reunited say they were coerced. Children, including some babies and toddlers, haven't seen their parents in months. It's likely that some of those children will never see their parents again.

But even that tragedy is just part of an overwhelming story of what happens every day at our border as hundreds of families cross from South to North seeking refuge and finding a broken system with little space to accommodate them. Instead of engaging in efforts to fix the system, the Trump administration has zeroed in on one "solution": erecting a border wall.

Last year, Father Roy Snipes, who serves at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and watches over the nearby La Lomita mission, organized a prayer walk and rally at La Lomita protesting the proposed border wall. The current plan would cut off the historic

site and place the chapel between the wall and the Rio Grande. Residents' signs listed a host of environmental and humanitarian grievances. The most pressing? Immigrants demonized by the Trump administration are, quite literally, their neighbors.

"No wall between amigos," read one of the church's signs. Though plans and congressional funding are still on track to build a wall along the border through parts of Hidalgo County, the faith resistance continues.

The prayers of the faithful lifted at La Lomita Chapel serve as a reminder that the story of Christian faith is one of migration, of sojourning, of welcoming—and of warning to those who refuse their welcome. As Snipes put it at the protest, "We continue the journey through time into eternity, and we know we are only here for a little while, so we make haste to be kind and we are quick to love." ■

***Sandi Villarreal** is web editor and chief digital officer for Sojourners. Read more of her reporting from the U.S.-Mexico border at sojo.net.*

By Eric L. Olson

Under Ortega, Nicaragua Explodes

From people's movement to autocracy. What went wrong in Nicaragua?

TENS OF THOUSANDS of Americans took the Pledge of Resistance in the 1980s to oppose funding for a U.S.-backed militia formed to overthrow the Sandinista government in Nicaragua. Now that government, led by Daniel Ortega, is accused of gross human rights violations against student protesters. What happened?

After nearly 12 years in office this time around, Ortega and what remains of the Sandinista movement now cling to power through repression, threats, and intimidation. Many of those who fought alongside the Ortega brothers to free their country from the Somoza dictatorship and joined arms to defend the revolution from Ronald Reagan's contras have left the Sandinista party out of disgust or were purged by an increasingly autocratic Daniel Ortega.

Sandinismo has given way to *Ortegismo*. Ortega is determined to hold on to power through authoritarian rule rather than governing in the spirit of Ernesto Cardenal and Father Miguel d'Escoto.

Despite Ortega's defeat at the polls in 1990, he never lost his thirst for power and ran for president in each successive election until he won in 2006. He was adept at exploiting the weaknesses, greed, and corruption of his old adversaries and creating new alliances with them. First, he struck a deal with former President Arnoldo Alemán, who was serving a 20-year sentence for corruption. In exchange for Ortega's promise to overturn his sentence, Alemán supported a package of electoral and legal reforms that allowed Ortega to win in 2006 with just 38 percent of the vote and allowed Ortega to take control of the National Assembly and eventually the Supreme Court and Supreme Electoral Council.

> The Ortega government has sought to criminalize public protest.

Ortega also struck a deal with Nicaragua's private sector council that had bitterly opposed him in the 1980s and helped finance his electoral defeat in 1990. Ortega and the council fashioned a pact in which Ortega agreed not to intervene in the dealings of the private sector and they, in turn, would refrain from getting involved in his political agenda.

He also reached an agreement with his old nemesis, Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo, by supporting a legislative package that criminalized abortion and promoted a conservative social agenda. Ortega's détente with the church served to rescue him from allegations by his stepdaughter, Zoilamérica Ortega Murillo, that he had raped and sexually molested her for a dozen years. Ortega and Zoilamérica's mother, Rosario Murillo, were married by the cardinal. Rosario Murillo is now Nicaragua's vice president.

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The mission of *Sojourners* magazine is to inspire hope and action by articulating the biblical call to racial and social justice, life and peace, and environmental stewardship.

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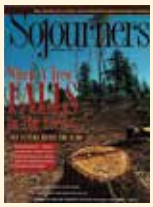
From the Archives

November 1990

Class Mobility



I REMEMBER one particularly troubling occasion at I.S. 61, Leonardo da Vinci Intermediate School in Queens. I was in sixth grade, class 6C, an SP (special progress) class. One day, midway through the school year, the assistant principal walked into my homeroom class and told me that I was being transferred into 6N. ... When you are 10 years old and in the third-ranked class in the sixth grade, to be told suddenly in front of your classmates that you are being transferred into the 14th-ranked class is embarrassing. In the few seconds it took for my mind to absorb this bad news and the shock of it, the opinion of my classmates of me changed from "peer" (meaning somewhat smart) to "dumb."

The next morning I reported to class 6N. I told the teacher that I really did not belong there and that no one explained to me why I was being transferred. Had I been struggling in my subjects? ... The most painful part was the plummet in expectations for me by my teachers. I had no relationship with them or my classmates, or with the guidance counselor who was absent during this two-week nightmare and the administration that had arbitrarily removed me from one social group to another. Everything was different: expectations, requirements, friends, attitudes toward school and learning, values, and life chances. Although I was put back into class 6C after two weeks, no explanation was given to me except that a mistake had been made. ■

***Anthony A. Parker** was assistant editor of* Sojourners *when this article appeared.*

Ortega reduced tensions with the United States by finding common ground in the so-called war on drugs. As head of the U.S. Southern Command, Gen. John Kelly (now President Trump's chief of staff) once told several Latin America analysts the U.S. military had no better partner in the "war on drugs" than the Nicaraguan military.

Despite Ortega's near monopoly on power, important progressive and independent social movements have emerged in Nicaragua. An independent women's movement came together in response to the Zoilamérica case and to the laws undermining reproductive rights. Rural and environmental movements formed to prevent confiscation of lands by the government to make way for a supposed canal to be built with Chinese investments to compete with the Panama Canal.

While Ortega sought to maintain a tight lid on social protest, frustration boiled over when protests, beginning in April, were met with brutal repression, which led to more than 300 deaths by August. Additionally, more than 400 people were believed to be held as political prisoners. The government-led violence also involved pro-government militias and ignited increased frustration with the regime. Protests led by students, peasants, women, and environmentalists spread spontaneously. The private sector also joined in acknowledging their past mistakes with Ortega. The Ortega government has sought to brand the protesters "terrorists" and to criminalize public protest.

Given the history between Nicaragua and the United States, it is tempting to fall back into the Left-Right dichotomy that was so pervasive in the 1970s and '80s. Nevertheless, it is our responsibility as individuals who care about justice, accountability, environmental integrity, and human rights—especially for women, girls, and the poor—to speak out when those values are betrayed and when progressive rhetoric is used to hide environmental destruction, political repression, and murder. ■

***Eric L. Olson** is an expert on U.S. policy in Latin America. He lives in Washington, D.C.*

By Nicholas Sooy

Choosing Forgiveness over Grudges

Christians in Ethiopia, Eritrea 'praise God for helping us see this day.'

A NEW VISION for peace has broken out in the Horn of Africa. For nearly two decades, Ethiopia and Eritrea have been locked in one of the most intractable conflicts in Africa. From 1998 to 2000, nearly 75,000 people on both sides were killed in the war.

That changed in July when Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki signed a joint declaration of peace and friendship, which ended the war and promised cooperation. Abiy declared, "There is no border between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Instead, we have built a bridge of love."

The stalled peace process rapidly progressed after Abiy was elected in April. Phone lines have reopened between Eritrea and Ethiopia, and flights between the two neighbors have resumed after 20 years. Families separated by the war are now able to communicate and reunite; many Ethiopians in the diaspora may now return home.

Abiy's philosophy is that everyone should be included in the peace process. Speaking at a dinner with Eritrean President Afwerki, Abiy defined the idea of *medemer* (inclusion and multiplicity) in the peace process as "[t]ender love instead of abject cruelty, peace instead of conflict, love over hate, forgiveness over holding grudges, pulling instead of pushing ... Handled wisely, our differences are our assets."

Abiy's commitment to an inclusive process is rooted in his doctoral studies at the Institute for Peace and Security in Addis Ababa, where he focused on the role of religious communities in overcoming conflict. Abiy has highlighted the central role religion must play in reconciliation efforts between the two nations.

Ethiopian and Eritrean religious leaders have long worked for peace, even as political solutions lagged. Catholic bishops have asked every parish to offer special prayers and to organize events for peace. Cardinal Berhaneyesus Souraphiel, head of the Ethiopian Catholic Church, commented, "It is very pleasing to the Catholic Church that the prayers of the people of both countries have been answered ... steps taken so far by both governments prove that Africans have the wisdom to solve their problems themselves. The Catholic Church will continue to pray both for Ethiopia and Eritrea."

Reconciliation is not only coming *from* the churches, but also *to* the churches. For more than two decades, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church has been split—one former patriarch living in exile and caring for the diaspora community, the other patriarch leading the church at home.

"Africans have the wisdom to solve their problems themselves."

Within a few weeks of the peace agreement with Eritrea, Ethiopian bishops reached an agreement to end the schism. At a speech at Holy Trinity Cathedral in Addis Ababa, Abiy promised to help end a similar schism in the Eritrean church.

There is still a long way to lasting peace in the Horn of Africa, with a great deal of physical and political infrastructure in Ethiopia and Eritrea built around the previously perpetual state of war—including deplorable human rights abuses by both governments.

Nonetheless, in August, Abune Mathias, the patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, summarized the jubilant and prayerful sentiment that has swept the region: "Let there be peace from today on. We praise God for helping us see this day." ■

Nicholas Sooy *is chief editor at In Communion, website of the Orthodox Peace Fellowship, and a teaching fellow at Fordham University in New York City.*

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We are calling on faith leaders to join this crucial effort to protect every vote, particularly those of the most vulnerable.

LawyersandCollars.org

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Skinner Leadership Institute

National African American Clergy Network

NEWS

Lyvonne "Proverbs" Picou preaches on the black church and sexual abuse.

Preaching about Violence

According to new data from LifeWay Research commissioned by We Will Speak Out, IMA World Health, and Sojourners, the percentage of pastors who speak on domestic and sexual violence more than once a year has increased from 34 percent to 51 percent in the past four years. Sojourners' Women & Girls campaign asked pastors who are preaching about sexual and domestic violence to share their sermons—and they did.

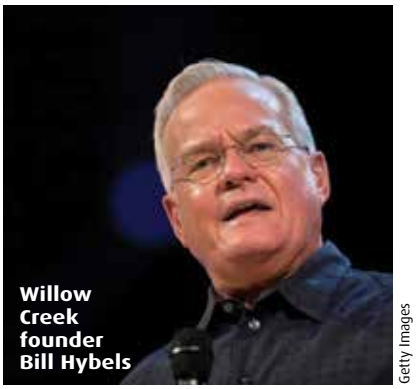
See all the sermons at **sojo.net/100sermons.**

QUOTED

"It's 66 different authors banging their heads against the wall, arguing with each other and trying to figure out what God wants from them."

— Mark Russell
on the Bible
sojo.net/biblestories

VIEWS



Willow Creek founder Bill Hybels

Getty Images

The Sin of Patriarchy

In April, Willow Creek Community Church founder Bill Hybels resigned over allegations of sexual misconduct that spanned decades—and had been ignored by the church's board of elders. In August, a Pennsylvania grand jury released a report that revealed a cover-up of abuse that Catholic priests committed against at least 1,000 children over a period of 70 years. "It's safe to say that Christianity is experiencing a patriarchal crisis," wrote Sojourners' Daniel José Camacho.

But, Camacho continued, "[I]t's important to name this evil and identify the particular ways in which it manifests. In both of these cases, the abuse took place in environments dominated by *men* with *inordinate power* and *little accountability* ... It's time for Christian leaders and members to own up to the patriarchal crisis that churches are experiencing. When the book of Genesis describes the fallen, sinful nature of humanity, it names the specific curse of oppressive male domination.

"To simply chalk these instances up to sin in the abstract misses the ways in which sin has become enfleshed in hierarchical church structures led by men with little accountability. It also lets men and male religious leaders off the hook. If we can understand this, then perhaps we can think about steps for moving forward."

Read more at **sojo.net/patriarchy.**

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BY CATHERINE WOODIWISS

2018 graduates of Creative Reaction Lab's design apprenticeship studied how public transit access could improve local quality of life.

Creative Reaction Lab

Design and the Pursuit of Justice

DEBATE THE CHOICE all you want, but what was radical about a congressional candidate's ban on press at an August public town hall event wasn't her decision to shut out journalists. It was how publicly she was willing to attempt new things, to try to make democracy work for a new slice of participants.

"We are genuinely trying to create environments where our constituents feel comfortable expressing honestly and engaging in our discourse," she tweeted. "Genuine Q?: how should we label a free campaign event, open to all, that's a sanctuary space?"

Though she and other justice-minded public officials may not use these words, what they are attempting is a kind of human-centered design.

> After Mike Brown was killed in Ferguson, she asked herself, "What should *designers* do?"

Human-centered design is fairly self-explanatory: When designing systems, services, or products, creators place humans at the center. But in practice, this can be radical: If my focus is to make an experience better for *each* user, I will design for individuals, not market trends; I will design for the outliers and anomalies, not the majority.

And, critically, it requires empathy, using every tool I can muster to fully understand what the user experiences as they interact with the system, solving problems worth solving.

Of course, the best way to learn the process is to go through it yourself.

Designer Antionette Carroll lives in Ferguson, Mo. After Mike Brown was killed in Ferguson, she asked herself, "What should *designers* do?"

"Systems of oppression, injustice, and inequities are designed. [Social justice is] a design decision," she said later in a TED talk on justice and design. "Why are we not inviting designers to the table to address these social issues that are embedded in our culture?"

Carroll launched Creative Reaction Lab as a 24-hour design challenge for St. Louis, focused on racial equity and police brutality. Five projects were implemented in the area. Carroll says one project intended for the Black Lives Matter protests resulted in more than 760 actions taken in the first three months after Brown's death.

Creative Reaction Lab is now a growing platform for healthy, racially equitable black and Latinx populations. They're far from alone: Colloqate, Allied Media Projects, the Algorithmic Justice League, and others are merging their design training with a vision of participant democracy that works for all. In August, Carroll led the first-ever AIGA Design for Inclusivity Summit in St. Louis.

Carroll calls community members—those who live through policies, not just plan them—the "living experts." Designing for justice, she says, lies in learning to "radically listen."

Our democracy has long functioned on a market-based approach—policy by and for a majority-middle. But a dominant-led system that doesn't also accommodate the outliers doesn't work for true justice.

It's not partisan or wishful thinking to begin to shape our democracy around the experiences of the most marginalized. It's a practical way to design.

"I like the approach of thinking through this stuff in the open," journalist Ryan Grim wrote of the House candidate. "She's trying a new kind of bottom-up politics, and this is what that looks like." ■

***Catherine Woodiwiss**, former deputy web editor at Sojourners, is a journalist and designer in Austin, Texas.*

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It's Not Just the Russians

There are many ways to rig an election—from purging voter rolls to hampering access to the polls and partisan gerrymandering. A look at the faces of voter suppression.

by **CAROL ANDERSON**

WHAT DOES ELECTION-RIGGING LOOK LIKE? Often, on its face, it looks quite benign.

Take Ohio. The official elections website of Ohio's secretary of state proclaims that "all eligible Ohioans have equal access to one of the best elections systems in the country."

But "equal access" isn't always what it appears.

Ohio provides only one polling station per county for early voting—which on the surface gives the impression that the system is fair and equitable. But—and here's the rub—the counties are fundamentally different. For instance, Pickaway County, just south of Columbus, has fewer than 60,000 residents. Hamilton County, where Cincinnati is located, has a population of more than 800,000 people. But each county only has one early-voting station.

The results have been predictable—and have not been race-neutral. In the 2012 presidential election, there were no lines to vote early in Pickaway County, which is 94.5 percent white. But Hamilton County, with its 206,000 African-American residents, had a line that stretched a quarter mile. According to UrbanCincy.com, voters in Cincinnati reported wait times of more than four hours, and other urban areas, such as Cleveland and Columbus, faced similar obstacles. (Comparable delays occurred in 2016.) The Republican Party chair for Columbus' county defended the long waits, telling the *Columbus Dispatch*, "I guess I really actually feel we shouldn't contort the voting process to accommodate the urban—read African American—voter turnout machine."

Unfortunately, Ohio is not alone. According to a report in *Mother Jones* titled "Even Without Voter ID Laws, Minority Voters Face More Hurdles to Casting Ballots," African Americans across the country waited about twice as long to vote as did white people in the 2012 election—and the trends are getting worse, not better. A study by the Brennan Center for Justice found a strong correlation

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between precincts with significant minority populations and polling places that have a shortage of resources, such as voting machines and poll workers—and these are big factors in long voting lines, which tend to depress voter turnout. In South Carolina, the study found, areas with the longest waits had more than twice the percentage of African-American voters than the state as a whole.

Erecting obstacles to voting—for some

Restrictions on early voting aren't the only obstacles and inconveniences put in place in recent years. For instance, an official in Randolph County, Ga., recently proposed closing seven of the nine polling places in the county, which happens to be majority black. For many of the county's residents, that would mean the nearest polling place would be as much as 10 miles away. For every tenth of a mile that a polling place is moved from an African-American community, the black voter turnout goes down by .5 percent, especially in poor areas where transportation options are limited. Making polling places less accessible depresses the black turnout rate. (After an outcry, Randolph County backed off its plans to eliminate polling places for the 2018 midterms.)

The "consolidation" (read: closing) of polling places isn't limited to Georgia. After the Shelby County v. Holder decision by the U.S. Supreme Court that gutted the Voting Rights Act, jurisdictions that used to have to go under preclearance—places that were required to have their voting changes okayed by the Department of Justice because of their problematic histories of racial discrimination—had 868 fewer polling places in the 2016 election than they did before the court's ruling.

The architects of voter suppression efforts have been systematic in their targeting of specific populations. In North Carolina, for example, legislators studied voting data from recent elections and saw that Sunday was a heavy-turnout day for African Americans—efforts such as Souls to the Polls encouraged voting on the Sunday before Election Day by helping transport people from churches to polling places. In response, the North Carolina Republican Party, according to the Raleigh *News & Observer*, "encouraged its appointees on the county boards to 'make party line changes to early voting' by limiting the number of hours and keeping polling sites closed on Sundays." Republican-led election boards, the *News & Observer* reported, responded by reducing early-voting opportunities in 23 counties.

Party leaders have taken the same data-driven approach regarding photo-ID requirements. Politicians know the identifying markers of their constituency, and they know the markers of the other party's constituency. In North Carolina, for instance, they received data, by race, on what types of identification, government photo IDs, that African Americans had and didn't have, and then they crafted laws to require the ones that African Americans did not have. In Texas, students are seen as "a little too liberal," so student ID doesn't count at polling places—but gun-registration ID does count. So: Students no, gun owners yes. That's how the electorate gets shaped.

Along the same lines, data shows that, proportionally, young people and minorities often don't vote regularly in every election. So Republicans insist on "maintenance" of voter rolls—which can result in purging minorities and young people from the rolls and preventing otherwise-eligible people from casting their ballots. Many of these mechanisms sound reasonable, but the way that they're operationalized are very unreasonable, and in fact sometimes downright racist. In Ohio, for example, African Americans were five times more likely than whites to vote during an early-voting period that Republican officials recently eliminated.

Intentional attacks on the 15th Amendment

Many of these measures to curtail people's access to the ballot box, particularly moves to require certain forms of photo ID, are justified as alleged protections against "voter fraud." But is voter fraud really a problem? Justin Levitt, a professor at Loyola Law School in Los Angeles and a nationally recognized scholar of constitutional law, did a study of voting between 2000 and 2014. Out of 1 billion votes cast in those years—in general, primary, special, and municipal elections—he found only 31 credible allegations of potential fraud that might have been prevented by a rule requiring ID at the polls. That's 31 out of 1 billion votes.

In-person voter fraud is, simply put, a lie.

In-person voter fraud is, simply put, a lie. It's a lie designed to create fear, to create a consternation in the body politic that something has to be done to "protect" the integrity of our elections—and then used to undermine that very integrity. The hypocrisy of talking about protecting democracy while you systematically deny the rights of American citizens to the basic right to vote is absolutely heinous.

The greatest crime, in my view, is that there are people who are actually putting intentional effort—time and money—into figuring out how to make voting hard, into denying American citizens their basic 15th Amendment rights. Certain states and party officials are systematically thinking through: How do we keep our populations from voting?

Our challenge, in the face of this, is to do the opposite: Instead of placing obstacles, we must seek ways to ease access to the ballot box so we have greater participation in democracy, not less. That's the only way to build a truly representative democracy.

Voting is neither an obstacle course nor a privilege. It's a right, and one that was not easily achieved. I'm acutely aware of how hard African Americans and others have had to fight, and how many have been beaten and died, for the right to vote. It is precious. ■

***Carol Anderson** is the Charles Howard Candler professor and chair of African American studies at Emory University. She spoke with* Sojourners *in August about her new book,* One Person, No Vote: How Voter Suppression is Destroying Our Democracy *(Bloomsbury, 2018).*

Why I Vote

People offer many reasons for not voting, from "the whole system is corrupt" to "my vote doesn't make any difference." Others vote as if democracy depends on it.

A Deeply Moral Act

Voting is a decisive statement of Christian faith that I matter, justice matters, and others matter.

by **RICHARD ROHR**

Low voter turnout is generally a sign of a demoralized society, and people of power feed on that demoralization, knowing that they can then easily gerrymander, suppress and limit voting rights, and give elections to the rule of money and lobbyists—and there will be little outcry, because there is so little trust or even interest in the whole system anyway.

Yet this is largely where the U.S. is today.

The powers that control society are quite happy that it is always minorities of all stripes that first feel this powerlessness and this demoralization. Since the early days of representative government, it has been believed that democracy would only work if there was a truly free and informed citizenry. We presently seem to lack both in the U.S. This is why voting is a deeply moral act for me—in rebuilding confidence and encouraging an intelligent and hope-filled society. It is also a decisive act of Christian faith that I matter, society matters, justice matters, and others matter.

Not to vote is to hand our power and our dignity over to people who fear actual freedom, honest intelligence, and faith in the very goodness of humanity. ■

Richard Rohr, OFM, *is the founding director of the Center for Action and Contemplation in Albuquerque, N.M.*

Reuters

Why I Vote

Voting for Change

I vote because many of my brothers and sisters can't.

by **MYRNA PÉREZ**

I vote for a lot of reasons. I love joining my fellow citizens in a community-minded act. I love having a say in picking the leaders who get to decide on things that matter to me. Increasingly, I love to vote and feel compelled to vote because I know there are about 4.5 million Americans living and working in communities across the country who cannot because they have a criminal conviction in their past.

Many states severely limit if not outright prohibit Americans with criminal convictions from voting, but there is a lot of inconsistency. In two states, persons never lose their voting rights even while they are incarcerated. In 15 states, a person is able to vote automatically upon release from prison (or if they were never incarcerated for their crime). On the other end, any felony conviction in three states—Iowa, Kentucky, and Florida—will result in permanent disenfranchisement unless the government specifically restores an individual's rights. The rest of the states are somewhere in the middle.

When I vote, I remember that Jesus was "convicted" and executed as a criminal alongside other criminals. When I vote, I remember that God calls me to reconcile with my neighbors who have past convictions. When I vote, I remember that some of my brothers and sisters can't. And I vote to try to change that. ■

***Myrna Pérez** is deputy director of the Brennan Center's Democracy Program and leader of the center's Voting Rights and Elections project.*

Cassi Alexandra

Rock the Vote

Harnessing the Power of Culture

Connecting young people to the civic process.

by **MUSTAFA SANTIAGO ALI**

In the 20th century, young people fought for equality. In the 21st century, young people are still fighting for equality but also fighting for opportunity and existence. Opportunity to thrive; access to good paying jobs, no student debt, affordable housing. And, sadly, gun violence, police brutality, and climate change are all matters of life and death.

Every year, 4 million young people turn 18 and become eligible to vote. Their vote is powerful. It has the ability to create reforms that will lead to a more inclusive direction for our country and destroy the old "isms"—racism, sexism, ageism—that have anchored and held our country back for far too long. That's why, in its 10th year, Hip Hop Caucus' Respect My Vote! campaign (RespectMyVote.com) is harnessing the power of culture to connect young people to the civic process.

Young people know this is their time to make a better future for all. Their vote matters. All our votes matter. A brighter future lies ahead, but it is only achievable if we show up and vote. We give away our power and chance at equality, opportunity, and existence if we don't. ■

***Mustafa Santiago Ali** is senior vice president of climate, environmental justice, and community revitalization at the Hip Hop Caucus.*

Aligning with Harmony

Voting is the easiest part of the process for making positive change—and it is the very least that I can do to maintain my integrity.

by **RANDY WOODLEY**

I vote because people's lives matter. It would feel very self-centered for me to say I care about my Earth community (including people and all other creation) and then not do everything I can to make a positive difference. I honestly believe I can make the world a better place. This is especially true when it concerns marginalized people in our society; I use any power I have to help others. My own faith traditions of following Jesus and my Indigenous ways compel me to work for everyone's well-being, not just my own. I vote with a bias for the common good, for the policies that align with shalom or harmony.

But I don't *just* vote. After critically examining and engaging the candidates and the issues, I advocate for those persons and policies that I think will make the world a better place. I expose the issues and I attempt to educate and influence others through my writings, protests, and public advocacy and through my speaking engagements. Voting is simply the easiest part of the whole process for making positive change and it is the very least that I can do to maintain my integrity as a fellow Earth dweller with all of creation. ■

***Randy Woodley** is distinguished professor of faith and culture and director of intercultural and Indigenous studies at Portland (Ore.) Seminary of George Fox University and author of* Shalom and the Community of Creation: An Indigenous Vision.

Getty Images

A Precious and Hard-Gained Right

For Asian Americans, access to voting was slow in coming.

by **GRACE JI-SUN KIM**

As an Asian American, I cannot ignore how white Americans treated my forebears in their early days in this country. Asian Americans built the railroads, and many lost their lives in that effort. They worked in harsh conditions in the Hawaiian sugar cane industry and in gold and silver mining. Many worked and died as indentured workers who couldn't marry or move around without permission, and who never made enough money to return to their country of origin if they so desired.

Living in harsh conditions, Asian Americans had little power to challenge their exploitation and oppression. In 1882, Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, which prevented Chinese people from entering the U.S. It was the country's first ban of any ethnic group. The Chinese people who were already in the U.S. had to carry papers and prove their residency if stopped by police. The ban was supposed to last only 10 years, but it remained in effect until 1943, when Chinese immigrants were finally allowed to vote—nearly 100 years after Asian Americans began migrating to the U.S. Voting rights for those from India and other Asian nations soon followed.

Until they were granted the right to vote, these immigrant communities were limited in their ability to fight for their labor rights in the fields, in the mines, and on the railroads. They could not run for office and were unable to impact U.S. politics. We need to remember the lapses in order to emphasize the country's stated ideals—and call the nation to live into them fully.

Today, citizens of all ethnicities have the right to vote. We cannot take this for granted. We have the power to vote—the power to make a difference. We can't forget how precious that is. ■

***Grace Ji-Sun Kim** is an associate professor of theology at Earlham School of Religion. She has written or edited 15 books, including* Embracing the Other, *and is an ordained Presbyterian minister.*

Why I Vote

Getty Images

A Better Tomorrow

God created us to be a community responsible for each other.

by **NORMA PIMENTEL**

I vote because I have faith in humanity, and I have hope that together all who believe in a just and peaceful world can elect leaders who choose to govern with integrity, courage, perseverance, passion, and a deep commitment to human rights.

I vote because I believe God created us to be our brother and sister's keeper and made us a community responsible for each other. Knowing that life is a gift from God that must be preserved and protected always from birth to death, we all have a responsibility to defend all human life with dignity and respect.

I vote because if I don't, I will have failed to do my part in contributing to a better tomorrow, a place where all humanity can live together in peace, and a day when our leaders will stand and fight for justice.

The question is, do *you* vote? If not, why not? ■

Sister Norma Pimentel, MJ, *is executive director of Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley in McAllen, Texas.*

Affirming the Divine Imprint

Pastors and lawyers will provide a moral and legal presence against voter suppression.

by **BARBARA WILLIAMS-SKINNER**

Our faith teaches us that all people are created in the image of God. Protecting the right to vote affirms the divine imprint and inherent value of all of God's children. Nothing diminishes the rule of law and our precious democracy more than voter suppression and efforts to marginalize and reduce the power of vulnerable voters.

Protecting the precious right to vote as a core value of American citizenship is the reason why Skinner Leadership Institute has joined Sojourners in the Lawyers and Collars program of voter protection and engagement (lawyersandcollars.org). The purpose of the Lawyers and Collars program is to equip and empower pastors and local church leaders in sacred garb to work alongside lawyers to protect vulnerable citizens in voting precincts. Together, they will provide a combined legal and moral presence against voter suppression, intimidation, and harassment expected to rise in the 2018 midterm elections.

One of the most potent elements of the Lawyers and Collars program is the "We Are Watching" meetings with secretaries of state and other elected officials across the country. Clergy leaders in selected states will remind elected officials that Lawyers and Collars will be monitoring the election process to ensure every citizen can exercise their right to vote. The program will also provide state-level gatherings and voter-protection training sessions.

We urge pastors and clergy leaders to join us in protecting the right to vote, a fundamental right of citizenship. ■

Dr. Barbara Williams-Skinner, *the first woman to serve as executive director of the Congressional Black Caucus, is CEO of the Skinner Leadership Institute and author of* I Prayed. Now What? *(2018).*

BY BILL McKIBBEN

Poet Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner of the Marshall Islands.

A Cost Only Art Can Measure

EVERY POLITICAL LEADER on the planet should be stuck aboard a jet and taken north to see the Greenland ice sheet—it would be well worth the carbon emissions to show them just how fast climate change is now happening.

Case in point: I was aboard a boat en route to the Qaterlait glacier in August when I looked up at the GPS unit above the captain's head. It showed an icon of the boat, steaming rapidly across ... solid land. That's because when the chart was drawn a decade ago, the bay we were crossing didn't exist: It was still solid ice.

I had the great fortune of journeying to the ice sheet with two young poets—a Greenlander named Aka Niviâna and a native of the Marshall Islands, Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner. These two remarkable women were at opposite ends of the same story—as the ice melted, the traditional life of Greenlanders was beginning to disappear. And the water that poured into the oceans is now drowning low-lying islands such as the Marshalls.

The units of measurement are sadness and fury—and also, remarkably, hope.

So it was no great surprise that the poem these two had written—and were filmed performing atop the great ice sheet—was angry at times. It was a fury that came from long and bitter history—the Marshalls were the site of U.S. atom bomb tests after World War II, and Bikini Atoll remains uninhabitable, while the U.S. left nuclear waste lying around the ice when it abandoned the 30 bases it built in Greenland.

The very same beasts
That now decide
Who should live
And who should die ...
We demand that the world see beyond
SUVs, ACs, their pre-package convenience
Their oil-slicked dreams, beyond the belief
That tomorrow will never happen

Of course, climate change is different, the first crisis that—though it affects the most vulnerable first and hardest—will eventually come for us all.

Let me bring my home to yours
Let's watch as Miami, New York,
Shanghai, Amsterdam, London
Rio de Janeiro and Osaka
Try to breathe underwater ...
None of us is immune.

The scientists on this expedition confirmed every detail about the ongoing crisis, but they too watched the poets with a certain awe. Alun Hubbard, a Welsh scientist, conceded there were limits to what instruments could explain. "It's just gobsmacking looking at the trauma of the landscape," he said. "I just couldn't register the scale of how the ice sheet had changed in my head."

But artists *can* register scale—they can transpose the fact of melting ice to inundated homes and bewildered lives, gauge it against long history and lost future. Science and economics have no real way to value the fact that people have lived for millennia in a certain rhythm—have eaten the food and sung the songs of certain places that are now disappearing. This is a cost only art can measure, and it makes sense that the units of that measurement are sadness and fury. And also, remarkably, hope. Their poem—shouted into the chill wind—ended like this:

Life in all forms demands
The same respect we all give to money ...
So each and every one of us
Has to decide
If we
Will
Rise ■

Bill McKibben, *founder of 350.org, is the author most recently of* Radio Free Vermont: A Fable of Resistance.

Crew members of Carnival de Resistance, far left and above, perform "Wade Through Deep Water," a tale of transformation by, through, and with water. Presented this summer at Arch Street United Methodist Church in Philadelphia, the story features John the Baptist and the prophet Miriam, whose trials link patriarchy and empire with the privatization of water. The crew, getting ready for a performance, left, includes 30 individuals from across the U.S. and Mexico who share a communal lifestyle during the carnival's monthlong run.

Photos by Clancy Dunigan, Bimms Jetty, Kris J. Eden, and Tim Nafzinger

HOLY FOOLS

A traveling troupe of actors, musicians, and artists celebrate justice through theater.

When asked how often he went to the circus, William Stringfellow replied, "Not often ... about 20 times a year."

The wry 20th century theologian saw the "radical and wondrous splendor" of the big top as an image of the kingdom of God: miraculous, death-defying stunts; an impending sense of both calamity and delight; parodied pantomimes of social convention—all enacted by a company of the "freaks" snubbed by polite company. "The circus is eschatological parable and social parody," wrote Stringfellow. "It signals a transcendence of the power of death, which exposes this world as it truly is while it pioneers the kingdom."

Drawing inspiration from the biblical covenants between God, people, and land—as well as Stringfellow's beloved circus and other resistance traditions, including Brazilian Carnivale parades, Burning Man, West African drumming, and the warnings of Indigenous elders—the members of Holy Fool Arts pitched their tents in Philadelphia this summer to stage the seventh Carnival de Resistance, "a traveling carnival, village, and school for social change bridging the worlds of art, activism, and faith."

During the week, the troupe partnered with local groups to paint murals, work in gardens, teach Bible studies, and join creative acts of protest. On weekends, they staged ceremonial theater performances (with a bike-powered sound system), demonstrated fossil-fuel-free living in their eco-village, and hosted an interactive carnival midway, complete with sideshow attractions, art installations, crafts, and games.

"Carnival traditions are about simultaneously subverting the dominant order while temporarily inhabiting an alternative world of festive celebration, playful mockery, and embodied community," director Tevyn East told *Sojourners*. "We at the Carnival de Resistance seek to honor these long-standing traditions and spark the prophetic imagination through acts of resistance and incarnation."

—Betsy Shirley

Grandmother Oak and Cedar Woman, above, prepare to enter the big top for a 2015 performance in Charlotte, N.C. Riffing on Isaiah 14, the trees celebrate when Babylon falls. Song lyrics and monologues throughout the performances draw on the scholarship of Carnival mentors Ched Myers and Jim Perkinson. At right, a mythical creature from the Carnival show's prologue invites folks to turn off their devices and transition from production-oriented time to dream time, or "kairos."

Partnerships with local organizations energize the cultural programs and political engagement of Carnival residencies. This summer, the Carnival joined dozens of eco-justice groups and artists in Philadelphia to produce "Power Toward a Just Future," left, a parade urging the city to adopt renewable and clean energy sources. Manipulating a puppet created by the community group Spiral Q, above, Carnival artists confront a proposal for a new gas plant in Nicetown, an African-American neighborhood in Philadelphia.

Visitors to the midway, above, play tweaked versions of carnival games, including "knock down the walls of oppression," a game that can only be won when players coordinate their efforts. Over the course of seven residencies, Carnival artists have created 15 murals, including the one below, painted at All Saints Episcopal Church in Minneapolis in 2016.

Who Pays for Prison?

The financial and social toll of incarceration goes far beyond the sentenced individuals.

by **JULIE BENDER** • *illustrations by* **PETE RYAN**

The Lord has appointed me to bring good news ... to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners.

—Isaiah 61:1; Luke 4:18

April's biracial daughter Erin has a drug problem. Heartbroken, "April" has watched "Erin" negotiate the prison system for the past 17 years. Now age 44, Erin has been in and out of five prisons and four jails, totaling almost eight years—all on drug-related charges.

On any given day in the United States, at least 137,000 men and women are in prisons or jails for drug use or possession, with thousands more spending extended periods on probation and parole. Why have rates of drug use (excluding opioids) not changed significantly despite more than four decades of the so-called war on drugs? Why are so many punished by incarceration for an activity that does not directly harm others?

In fall 2016, I was looking for volunteer opportunities in retirement. Having worked with a prisoner-release program in Canada, I wanted to pursue criminal justice issues again. In Harrisonburg, Va., I discovered the Valley Justice Coalition, a local group concerned about reducing incarceration and recidivism in Harrisonburg and surrounding Rockingham County.

With 2.2 million inmates, "no other country in the world imprisons its citizens like we do," says Craig Haney, a professor of psychology at the University of California. Currently, 670 per 100,000 persons are incarcerated in the U.S., compared with 60 to 200 persons per 100,000 in other Western countries. This prison boom has led to annual spending of $72.5 billion on corrections.

But there are many additional costs: Every $1 spent on prisons results in an additional $10 in social costs—most of it borne by families, children, and local communities—according to a 2016 study from Washington University in St. Louis on "The Economic Burden of Incarceration in the U.S."

"No other country imprisons its citizens like we do."

The Valley Justice Coalition commissioned research into criminal justice issues in the area around Harrisonburg and connected me with several people in the criminal justice system whose stories illustrate the financial and human costs of incarceration.

Every $1 spent on prisons results in an additional

Drug addiction and incarceration

How might the life of April's daughter Erin have been different if she had received drug treatment instead of incarceration? If alternatives had been mandated, what costs might have been avoided?

During her eight years in prison, Erin lost potential wages of $264,000 (at average wages of $33,000 in 2014 dollars). Her lifetime earnings will also likely be affected by as much as 10 to 40 percent. Childcare costs provided by two grandmothers could have totalled $120,000 over eight years, plus costs for the children's food, clothes, and school expenses. Without compassionate grandmothers, these children would likely have been homeless or picked up by child welfare at a cost of roughly $278,208 over 12 years.

Erin's multiple re-entry periods were prolonged, a result of her addiction issues and the stigma of her criminal history. Thus Erin needed her mother's assistance for extended time periods, requiring help when facing eviction and moving costs, as well as interest and fees on unpaid debts. These financial costs were primarily assumed by family members, but for many incarcerated persons, they fall on the public.

The social costs from Erin's incarceration are less tangible but result in even more grievous long-term consequences. The Washington University study cites the following harmful effects of incarceration that carry over into families and the community:

- **Recidivism.** Without treatment for her addiction, Erin continued to "reoffend" by using drugs.
- **Children of incarcerated persons receive less education.** After being charged with gang-related activity, two of Erin's three sons were expelled from high school.
- **Children of incarcerated parents are five times more likely to go to prison.** Each of Erin's sons has served time in Department of Juvenile Justice facilities, one son's term extending into an adult facility.
- **Sixty-six percent of incarcerated persons and family members report detrimental mental health effects.** Erin suffered numerous traumatic events, often resulting from harsh treatment by prison staff.

Erin has completed her most recent prison term and has been released into a re-entry drug rehab program. She is also more emotionally stable due to receiving prescription drugs for her mental health issues. So April is optimistic about Erin's long-term stability.

A Family Affair

When a loved one goes to prison, family members—especially women—often bear the hefty financial consequences.

U.S. families that have an incarcerated family member bear costs totaling $2.9 billion every year. Here's how those costs add up.

$13,607

Average amount spent on conviction-related costs annually, which 63 percent of respondents said family members were primarily responsible for covering.

$10 in social costs—most of it borne by families.

But April and Erin's story is one multiplied many times in other families, as relatives and communities pay the high costs related to the criminalization of drug use and possession in our country. In 2016, Sen. Cory Booker of New Jersey correlated the war on drugs with the 500 percent increase of incarceration rates in the past 40 years, declaring that this war is "disproportionately affecting the poor and minorities"—often with stark consequences.

Treatment of young first-time offenders

"Jim," age 20, served a six-month sentence at the Rockingham-Harrisonburg Regional Jail, charged with grand larceny—a felony. This young adult appeared to be under the influence of drugs at the time of the offense, not fully comprehending the trouble he was causing or its consequences. Jim unfortunately fell into the vulnerable 18-to-24 age group, where youth are sentenced as adults even though often demonstrating maturity and behavior patterns more comparable to juveniles. If options other than incarceration would have been considered for Jim, the following questions might have been asked:

- What are appropriate consequences for breaking and entering a private home and stealing a TV? What damages were done to the home and to the people who lived there?
- How might Jim take responsibility for his misbehavior and best realize the effect of his actions on the victims and community?
- How might Jim best learn about the effects of his ongoing use of drugs?

Had the judicial system used the option of a drug court to teach the dangers of drug use, as well as a restorative justice process to repair the harm done, Jim's story could have turned out differently. One also wonders what might have happened had he been a white male rather than biracial.

We can estimate the financial cost. The incarceration may have cost taxpayers close to $15,000. His family likely paid approximately $200 monthly for supplemental nutritious food and toiletries. Minimum wages lost in six months could add up to $7,800. Jim's parents will likely shoulder the financial costs of helping Jim get re-established with a job, housing, and transportation for at least the first year, possibly longer. Should Jim take to the streets and become homeless, the costs would then fall on taxpayers (costing an average of $14,480 annually per homeless person).

34%

More than a third of families reported going into debt to pay for phone calls or visitation. Of those responsible for phone and visitation costs, 87 percent were women.

18%

Almost a fifth of families were evicted, denied housing, or disqualified from public housing once their formerly incarcerated family member returned.

$947

Average annual amount an inmate spends on commissary items. Inmates earn an average of $180 to $660 per year, so many families end up paying the difference.

50%

Half of family members experienced negative health impacts related to a loved one's incarceration.

65%

Almost two-thirds of families with an incarcerated member were unable to meet their family's basic needs.

Sources: "Who Pays? The True Cost of Incarceration on Families," Ella Baker Center for Human Rights, 2014; "The Company Store: A Deeper Look at Prison Commissaries," Prison Policy Initiative, 2018.

And then there are the hidden social costs of Jim's incarceration:

- the likelihood of reoffending, given that Jim's underlying drug issues were not addressed
- the effects on Jim's younger siblings, particularly an at-risk teenage brother
- the stigma Jim now faces in finding employment and housing, enlisting in the armed services, enrolling in university, or seeking a marriage partner

There are also criminogenic effects of incarceration. In Jim's case, these include learned helplessness; learned violence, to defend himself against other inmates; learning (from other inmates) how to make methamphetamines; disrespect for authority and for other people; the environment of living with hardened adult offenders; and negative role modeling by jail staff.

If we multiply Jim by the estimated 250,000 youth incarcerated as adults every year across the U.S., what are the implications for our nation? If we want to curtail mass incarceration, might alternate sentencing options for first-time young adult offenders be one place to begin?

Aging in prison

Brother Fink, as he is affectionately called by Christian volunteers, has served 28 years in prison, following charges of first degree murder, involuntary manslaughter, and use of a firearm. His crime was not premeditated but arose from a situation in which he lost control of himself, resulting in two deaths. He received an 87-year sentence, a de facto life term.

At age 62, Brother Fink is in relatively good health and still able to do janitorial work. While in prison he has had back surgery and currently needs an additional small surgery. Volunteers who visit Brother Fink observe him as a model prisoner who would no longer be a threat to society. He is generally in good spirits, bringing encouragement to others. Saddened by his past crimes, he faces each day with faith and prays for the families of those he has hurt so badly.

What has it cost to incarcerate Brother Fink thus far? The Commonwealth of Virginia has paid about $756,000, given the estimated cost of $27,000 per year. The years of wages lost by Brother Fink, working as a laborer, could reach more than $600,000. Brother Fink's weekly wages in prison total less than $13 and do not cover his monthly commissary expenses. Fortunately, Brother Fink has friends and relatives who help him, generously covering costs for visits, gifts, and taking care of his affairs.

The hidden costs of dehumanization are the most disturbing, such as the failure to meet basic human needs for belonging and safety. Extreme overcrowding, constant herding, threats of violence, and disrespect from staff and inmates are prevalent in prison environments. It is not surprising that many inmates, enduring these conditions over multiple years, exhibit symptoms of PTSD, such as extreme anxiety, night terrors, shame, and self-loathing. Some experts identify this as a "wound to the soul."

It is not surprising that many inmates exhibit symptoms of PTSD, such as extreme anxiety, night terrors, shame, and self-loathing.

Brother Fink received his 87-year sentence in 1990, when he was 34. The former parole system had offered incentives so that a sentence could be reduced. With cooperative behavior and attending educational programs, prisoners could earn "good time credits," so Brother Fink diligently complied. But by the mid-1980s, many states had passed "truth-in-sentencing" laws that required prisoners to serve higher percentages (typically 85 percent) of their already long sentences, followed in the '90s by "tough on crime" policies.

Now state prisons in the U.S. face an exploding elderly population. Between 1993 and 2013, the number of prisoners 55 years or older, serving sentences of one year or longer, increased 400 percent, to 131,500. If this trend continues, by 2030 a third of all inmates will be elderly, escalating the need for geriatric facilities and staffing, with costs twice that of younger inmates. The Osborne Association, which works with older prisoners and their families, estimates current annual spending at $16 billion for inmates aged 50 and older, warning that without decisive action the criminal justice system is at risk of collapsing under its own weight.

After serving 28 years, might Brother Fink be eligible for parole? Sadly, the Virginia parole board denies most releases, currently approving only 6 percent. Brother Fink has had 11 parole interviews, receiving three-year deferrals, including two geriatric turndowns.

As of October 2016, the backlog of prisoners eligible for parole in Virginia numbered 2,765, costing the state more than $77 million annually. Given this backlog and the seriousness of Brother Fink's crimes, what are his chances for release at his next parole hearing? Then multiply Brother Fink by more than 100,000 elderly prisoners across the nation, who are some of the most rehabilitated and *most infirm* in the system, thus posing the least threat to public safety.

Given incarceration rates in the U.S., do the numbers and resulting costs for the aged, young offenders, and the drug addicted reflect how we want our prisons used and our public monies spent? Is there a common-sense solution on which both political parties can agree? Could both conservative and progressive Christians support policies that would indeed "proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners"? ■

Julie Bender *has engaged in restorative justice work in Canada and taught in Ghana and China. She now lives in Goshen, Ind.*

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HIDDEN AGENDA

The court-packing strategy of the Right is more about culture wars than it is about abortion.

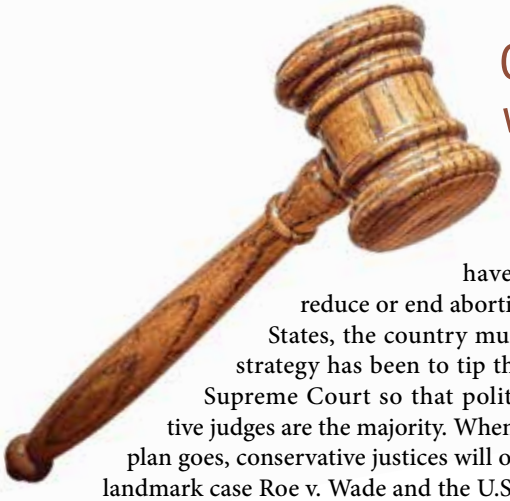
by **LISA SHARON HARPER**

Shutterstock images

AFTER JUSTICE ANTHONY KENNEDY announced his retirement from the Supreme Court, I was gripped with grief for my nieces, nephews, and their children *and* for the unborn. Why? Because as an African-American evangelical woman, I knew that a more firmly conservative Supreme Court would likely continue to roll back civil rights protections, making African Americans and other people of color more vulnerable, physically and economically.

At the same time, even though ending abortion has been proclaimed as a key goal by the conservative movement, their strategy to do so is poised to fail because it ignores the link between poverty and abortion in our country, both of which are also affected by access to equal rights and opportunity for all. And, truth be told, because ending abortion was never their real goal.

A conservative-majority court will all but guarantee the further removal of civil rights protections.



Overturning Roe wouldn't end abortion. In fact, it might increase it.

Conservatives have argued that to reduce or end abortion in the United States, the country must outlaw it. The strategy has been to tip the balance of the Supreme Court so that politically conservative judges are the majority. When in power, so the plan goes, conservative justices will overturn the 1973 landmark case Roe v. Wade and the U.S. will outlaw and therefore be rid of abortion. But that strategy was crafted by conservatives intent on exploiting differences of belief in U.S. society regarding "hot-button" issues—including abortion, guns, separation of church and state, LGBTQ+ rights, and censorship—to achieve political goals much broader than ethical concern about abortion.

As Randall Balmer explains in his seminal analysis of the Religious Right, *Thy Kingdom Come*, early 1980s evangelical leaders such as Pat Robertson and Jim Bakker, in partnership with political strategists including Paul Weyrich, aimed to leverage evangelical faith communities to build the conservative *political* movement, with the goal of pushing back against the gains of the civil rights era through a weakened federal government, few taxes (at least for the better off), and an expansive military. After a failed attempt to prohibit interracial marriage and protect segregation in the case of Bob Jones University v. United States, they shifted tactics. They turned their attention to abortion.

From 'war on poverty' to 'war on drugs'

Something else shifted in the 1970s and '80s. President Richard Nixon declared a so-called war on drugs in 1971 and transferred resources from President Johnson's "war on poverty" to federal drug control agencies. In 2016, Dan Baum wrote in *Harper's* about a 1994 interview he did with top Nixon aide John Ehrlichman in which Ehrlichman confessed that the policy was not really about containing drugs. It was aimed at undercutting Nixon's key "enemies," African-American people and anti-Vietnam War protesters.

"We knew we couldn't make it illegal to be either against the war or black," Ehrlichman told Baum. "But by getting the public to associate the hippies with marijuana and blacks with heroin, and then criminalizing both heavily, we could disrupt those communities."

Nixon's war on drugs devastated African-American communities. Money poured into programs that stripped, in disproportionate numbers, African-American families of their capacity to exercise agency by removing fathers through mandatory sentencing laws and no-knock warrants, while funds decreased for safety net programs. This was the start of modern-day mass incarceration. When these policies intensified under Reagan in the 1980s, poverty rates began to rise again. What does this have to do with abortion? In the first decade after Roe v. Wade—the first decade of official reporting on abortion rates—we didn't know what the data clearly shows us now, that poverty is a primary driver of abortion rates.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops reported in 2014 that economic hardship is a prime driver of abortion rates: "In a 2005 study, 73 percent of women undergoing an abortion said not being able to afford a baby now was a reason for the abortion." The study went on to explain: "That number rose to 81 percent for women below the federal poverty line. And while the abortion rate for American women declined by 8 percent between 2000 and 2008, among poor American women it increased by 18 percent."

Likewise, in 2017 the *American Journal of Public Health* reported that women living below the federal poverty level "accounted for almost half of all abortion patients in 2014, and this group had the highest abortion rate of all groups we examined."

To significantly reduce abortion rates, we must cut poverty.

The effects of a conservative court

Some who are morally opposed to abortion are eagerly awaiting the moment when Roe v. Wade can be overturned and, in their view, abortion will be no more. But overturning Roe won't end abortion. In fact, it may increase it.

First, overturning Roe would not end abortion nationwide. It would send the decision back to individual state legislatures to decide. The states most likely to outlaw abortion often have the lowest populations and already have the lowest abortion rates. Conversely, the states least likely to outlaw abortion tend to have the highest population centers in the nation, including urban areas with the highest concentrations of poverty and, predictably, the highest abortion rates. In short, overturning Roe v. Wade would likely have a marginal impact on the U.S. abortion rate.

Worse, a conservative majority court will all but guarantee the removal of civil rights protections secured by the landmark 1954 Supreme Court ruling in Brown v. the Board of Education. Rarely in the history of the court has a conservative majority ruled to explicitly protect the civil rights and freedoms of people of color. Rather, conservative majorities have consistently whittled away at civil rights protections based on the Brown decision and gained in the civil rights era.

For example, in 2013 a

> "WE KNEW we couldn't make it illegal to be either against the war or black. But by getting the public to associate the hippies with marijuana and blacks with heroin, and then criminalizing both heavily, we could disrupt those communities."
>
> **—Nixon aide John Ehrlichman**

conservative majority voted to defang the Voting Rights Act by declaring unconstitutional the formula that determines which states must seek preclearance before changing voting laws and structure. Section 4 of the act was nullified. Since then 23 states have introduced voter-suppression measures.

In the wake of five years of hashtags, marches, controversy, and attempted reform stemming from police killings of unarmed African-American and Latinx men, women, and children, a conservative majority of the Supreme Court turned a blind eye to the recommendations of the Obama administration's Task Force on 21st Century Policing. A conservative majority voted in 2018 to sanction the "Shoot First, Think Later" approach to policing, which empowers police to kill with virtual impunity.

Finally, in the 2007 case Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1, a conservative majority ruled that de facto segregation of school districts is constitutional. With this ruling, conservative justices took direct aim at Brown v. Board of Education and weakened every legislative act that rests on that ruling.

The case can be made that decreased liberty leads to increased poverty. Flipping Roe v. Wade by stacking the courts with conservative judges will ultimately increase abortions by increasing poverty in the U.S. And along with that, African Americans and other minorities in the U.S. will have their civil rights, economic opportunities, and right to life and liberty further undercut. Protection of all human life would not seem to be the true goal of conservative political strategists who exploit sincere moral differences among U.S. citizens regarding abortion.

The abortion rate in the United States is at an all-time low. The balanced makeup of the court over the past decades has contributed to these reductions. If we want abortion rates to continue to fall, we must do everything in our power to protect and secure the rights of people of color and other minorities. And we must wage war on poverty ... again. ■

Lisa Sharon Harper, *author of* The Very Good Gospel, *is president and founder of Freedom Road, L.L.C., a consulting group dedicated to shrinking the narrative gap.*

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L'Arche Community photos

By Stephanie Sandberg

Designed to **Care**

Jean Vanier on why we need compassionate, forgiving community now more than ever.

ON A BALMY SUMMER afternoon in July, I rang the bell at Jean Vanier's sky-blue gate in Trosly-Breuil, France. Vanier, the founder of L'Arche, an international federation of communities of people with and without developmental disabilities, is central to a new documentary film, *Summer in the Forest*. I was there to interview him about the film and as research for a play I'm helping to write for the 50th anniversary of L'Arche Daybreak community, near Toronto.

As the gate opened, Vanier, wearing his signature navy blue jacket, greeted me with the warmest presence I have ever felt, saying, "All the way from Daybreak you have come to visit me!" I replied sheepishly, "Yes, to finally meet the man who changed my life."

Above right, L'Arche founder Jean Vanier with a community member, and photos from L'Arche in Vancouver, Canada, left, and the Philippines, two of more than 150 such communities in the world.

My salutation was not hyperbole—Vanier's gift, a vision of communities where people live in a spirit of mutual learning, dignity, and care, has touched and changed the lives of thousands of people around the globe. Though I'd come for professional reasons, it also felt like a pilgrimage to seek Vanier's wisdom in the place where it all began. He ushered me into his small office and living room to chat.

In 1964, while Vanier was living in Trosly-Breuil, he visited a psychiatric hospital near Paris. He saw men there subjected to violence, locked up all day, and feared by the public. He was moved with a compassion that he couldn't totally understand at the time. But as Vanier told me, "We all have, as human beings, a design that teaches us to reach out to others, and

not only to serve ourselves. If we listen to this inner design, this inner voice, it will lead us always to do what is right." With little training and no formal plan, Vanier bought a dilapidated house and took three of the men out of the institution to live with him in the village.

The first night didn't go so well, as they could not find how the electricity worked and one of the men became so frightened and violent, smashing windows, that he had to return to the institution the next day. Two of the men, Raphaël Simi and Philippe Seux, lived with Vanier for the rest of their lives. Vanier named their home "L'Arche," French for "The Ark"—it became the first of what are now more than 150 L'Arche communities in 37 countries.

A hunger for relationship

Trosly-Breuil is a pristine and peaceful French village nestled against rolling forested hills where Vanier has spent years walking, the inspiration for the film title *Summer in the Forest*. When asked about the film, which is a meditative portrait of him and his life with L'Arche, Vanier said, "I hope it will show the forgiveness and celebration that are at the heart of L'Arche communities."

I asked Vanier what forgiveness means today. He spoke about the troubles and conflicts we are living in. "You know, there's a whole vision of Trump which is deep," he said. "And it's a very deep vision because it reflects what humanity was like a few thousand years ago. 'My tribe, my way.' The question is, how can you break down the walls of tribe that then become the walls of war? We need to break these down and become plains of peace, places where we can meet."

This idea of meeting one another, of finding places where we can meet both physically and figuratively, is at the heart of Jean Vanier's message now as he enters his 90th year. "In this moment," he says, "forgiveness is about coming together with people that you normally don't want much to do with. Forgiveness is not a forgiveness of struggle, but a desire to be together, and to say 'I need you. I need relationship. I need communion.'"

He admits that there is great difficulty in having this happen but points to the L'Arche community in Bethlehem as a prime example. *Summer in the Forest* follows Vanier to this community where Muslims, Christians, and Jews celebrate life together daily. In the film, Vanier asks, "How can we come together, because in each of us there's that little child yearning for peace and for love?" We see the community embracing Vanier as a loving hero of peace, and we witness him praying at the Israeli wall that divides up Palestine as gunshots in the distance haunt the stillness.

> "We all have, as human beings, a design that teaches us to reach out to others, and not only to serve ourselves." —Jean Vanier

"You're beautiful"

As we talked, Vanier circled back to the idea of forgiveness in the chaos and fear of our contemporary world. "There is a trickle of peace in this world now, with people who want to live together with one another, to help one another, to forgive one another, across all conflicts and divides. Now it is a trickle, and it will become a great flowing river of peace." He sees this in the communities such as The Simple Way in Philadelphia, in the outreach to the homeless on the streets of Paris, in the Little Sisters of Jesus serving as hubs of peace inside violent urban communities, in interfaith collaborative living popping up all over the globe. "But we must nurture it," he adds, "or it will decay and become like dust. It is a fragile thing, but with careful nurturing we can grow it and it will become stronger than the hate that threatens it."

Vanier told me about a Little Sister of Jesus who was serving in a rough

Continued on Page 41

New & Noteworthy

Life Stories

In *How Does It Feel to Be Unwanted? Stories of Resistance and Resilience from Mexicans Living in the United States,* LA-based (and Mexico City born) journalist Eileen Truax responds to rampant xenophobia with 13 profiles that highlight ways Mexican immigrants have overcome exclusion over the past 30 years. Beacon Press

Prophetic Compassion

On his new album, *Nothing Like the Rain,* singer-pianist-songwriter Ken Medema's soaring voice, storytelling gift, and deep compassion deliver songs infused in turn with praise and scriptural wisdom. He lifts up stories of the broken and brokenhearted, invoking the call to both justice and mercy. Brier Patch Music

A Living Word

A Lens of Love: Reading the Bible in Its World for Our World arose from a diverse Bible study group led by author Jonathan L. Walton, a minister of the Memorial Church of Harvard University. It offers a frame for ethically "reading, interpreting, and enacting scripture" in contemporary society. Westminster John Knox

Defiant Visions

Amy Laura Hall's *Laughing at the Devil: Seeing the World with Julian of Norwich* is a funny, gritty, and informative exploration of the life, times, and teachings of a medieval mystic who called people in her time and ours to joyous, courageous, and sometimes subversive faith. Duke University Press

BY DANNY DUNCAN COLLUM

What Are These 'Facts' You Speak Of?

FOR 20 YEARS, Alex Jones, a radio show host and founder of the Infowars website, has been spreading one off-the-wall conspiracy theory after another, and, for the past decade, social media have amplified his voice and his reach to a level his predecessors on the "paranoid Right" could never have imagined. In early August, Facebook and Google-owned YouTube finally took measures to effectively ban Jones from their platforms. But the way they did it raises more questions than it answers about the possibility of restoring respect for truth to public life in the United States.

Way back in the dying days of the 20th century, Alex Jones started his career ranting about the old conspiracy standbys, such as fluoride in our drinking water. But then 9/11 happened, and Jones took his act to a whole new level, claiming that the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon were really "inside jobs" unleashed by the secret government to launch a global war and suspend civil liberties.

Conspiracy hack Alex Jones

Reuters

In days gone by, such a theory would have been passed around on mimeographed fliers, and mainstream journalism, shackled by considerations of fact, wouldn't have touched it. But the social media era has freed us from all that. Now anybody can say anything, and everybody can hear it. Suddenly Alex Jones had an audience of millions for his Facebook pages, his YouTube channel, and his website; this success seemed to egg him on to ever more outrageous pronouncements. Finally, he hit rock bottom with the claim that the Sandy Hook school shooting was faked (to provide a pretext for seizing Americans' guns) and all those grieving parents were only acting.

Now some Sandy Hook parents are suing Jones for defamation. But those parents can't sue Facebook or YouTube, which disseminated the falsehoods to an audience of millions and made millions of advertising dollars in the process.

This is where the problem with the Alex Jones ban comes in. Facebook and YouTube didn't ban Alex Jones for intentionally spreading defamatory falsehoods, or for shouting fire in a crowded theater. Instead they banned him for hate speech for videos that contained anti-Muslim slurs and depicted cruelty to children.

Facebook and Google won't assess the truth or falsehood of stories on their platforms because to do so would upset their business model.

Facebook and Google won't get anywhere near anything that suggests they might be making decisions about the truth or falsehood of stories disseminated on their platforms because to do so would upset their business model, which is built upon Section 230 of the 1996 Communications Decency Act. That portion of the law exempts all "interactive computer services" from any liability for the content users may post on their site.

As long as social media simply provide an open forum, those harmed by a false story can only get justice from the individual who may have posted it. The deep pockets of the real publishers, Facebook and Google, are off limits. If Facebook and Google accept responsibility for determining the truth and falsity of the material they spread, they then become legally responsible when harmful falsehoods are published.

For more than 50 years, the standard governing U.S. journalism has held that the publisher must take reasonable measures to determine the truth or falsehood of a story. If the story is known (or should have been known) to be false and is still published, the publisher must pay. In the old days, this meant the owner of the newspaper, not the kid who threw the paper onto your front porch.

This rule has worked pretty well to serve the common good by maintaining a balance of freedom and responsibility. But now most Americans get at least some of their news via social media, and a substantial portion of the population is losing faith in the very existence of independently verifiable facts.

A new regulatory regime for social media is long overdue if we are ever going to be able to talk to each other clearly and truthfully about things that matter. ■

Danny Duncan Collum *teaches writing at Kentucky State University in Frankfort. He is the author of the novel* White Boy.

Continued from Page 39

neighborhood in France where many Muslim women wear the burka. The sister wanted so much to meet some of these women and befriend them, but she didn't know how. "One day she was walking through the community and caught a boy throwing stones and hurling expletives at a woman in a burka," Vanier said. "She knelt down to the boy and said, 'You shouldn't do that, it's not nice and you should say you're sorry.' The woman [in the burka] had stopped to watch. The boy asked the sister, 'Will I be forgiven?' and she replied, 'Yes.' And the boy looked up to the Muslim woman and said he was sorry. The sister knelt down again to the little boy and said, 'You're beautiful because you can say I'm sorry. It shows how beautiful you are.'" And after this, the Little Sister made many friends among the Muslim women.

Vanier describes this experience as vital because, he says, "You see what's interesting here is that if there hadn't been conflict, there could not have been this meeting. If there hadn't been conflict, they would have gone on passing one another by. [It shows] how conflict can lead to a meeting, and then in that conflict, there is forgiveness. I find something beautiful about conflict as a source of peace, if you know how to welcome conflict and the way through it, by kneeling to one another and offering help and forgiveness. And saying to one another, 'You are super because you can ask for forgiveness.'"

I spoke with an executive producer of *Summer in the Forest*, Oliver Pawle, who said his hope was for the film to be a tribute to Vanier and the spirit of L'Arche, and to demonstrate "the reality that we spend our life rushing around when in fact relationships are built by taking and wasting time ... having patience."

Whether in person or through *Summer in the Forest*, Jean Vanier and the communities he helped create are a breath of pure air in the middle of a culture where it can feel as if hope is drowning. As I left his home, Vanier concluded, "It's a very dark difficult time, and we need this message of peace. It's not easy work." ■

***Stephanie Sandberg** is an assistant professor of theater and film studies at Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Va.*

ONFILM

BY GARETH HIGGINS

From *Leave No Trace*

SACRIFICED BY **SOCIETY**

A TRAUMATIZED Iraq War veteran and Oscar Wilde don't immediately invite comparison, but in two current films they could be scapegoated brothers. **The Happy Prince,** a labor of love for its writer-director-star Rupert Everett, and **Leave No Trace,** director and co-writer Debra Granik's first fiction feature since *Winter's Bone*, are both about men in a wilderness, not because they have done anything wrong but because the dominant culture doesn't want to see them. And I mean truly see them—especially the way they may remind us of discomfort with ourselves.

In *Leave No Trace*, Ben Foster's Will has given mind and body for his country and wants to live where he feels safest—in the woods. He handles himself and keeps his daughter (the brilliant Thomasin McKenzie) physically safe, emotionally healthy, and growing in knowledge of the world, but because he doesn't care for the "system" that harmed him, he must hide or jump through hoops to prove he's as good as anyone else.

Everett's Oscar Wilde, in *The Happy Prince*, is trying to make a life after being imprisoned for love. The first prison was the love itself, love made torment by bigotry; the second a literal jail. He's broke and broken. He doesn't always treat others well, but aches to grant the world what he can: amusement at ourselves mingled with compassion for those living "in the gutter," whether or not they can see the stars. These beautiful films offer hope without cliché, recognizing that our experience of tragedy always coexists with love.

The *Happy Prince* and *Leave No Trace* have among the most evocatively ambiguous titles since *Unforgiven* reminded us that withholding mercy is also a form of (self-)harm. These current titles evoke their opposite, respecting pain and imagination as two sides of a coin and acknowledging how social conventions often depend on vulnerable people keeping their suffering secret. These stories are angry about the prejudice that seeks to turn so-called "difficult people" into blank slates instead of souls—but not vengeful. They illustrate the courage of those made to pay the price for all our sins and offer a powerful challenge to polarization.

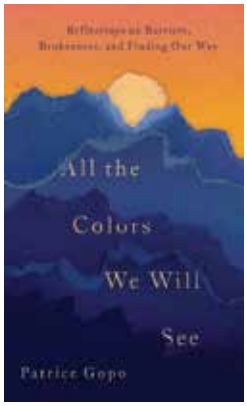
For, as it turns out, tending to the plank in our own eyes before the speck in someone else's might teach us to not attack someone for reminding us of what is unresolved in ourselves. Without self-reflective compassion that can differentiate between restorative accountability and scapegoating, the road to the common good is blocked. ■

***Gareth Higgins** is an Irish writer and founder of moviesandmeaning.com and www.irelandretreats.com.*

Reviewed by Natalie Brown

CHALLENGE AND **BEAUTY**

***All the Colors We Will See: Reflections on Barriers, Brokenness, and Finding Our Way,* by Patrice Gopo. Thomas Nelson.**



EQUAL PARTS brilliant imagery and candid reflection, *All the Colors We Will See* is a story on *becoming*. With vivid attention to detail and a deep reservoir of wisdom, Patrice Gopo has carefully crafted a collection of essays on love, loss, and longing.

This story begins in the 1980s, weaving together layers of identity formation as we learn Gopo's background as the daughter of Jamaican immigrants and explore her adolescent upbringing in Anchorage, Alaska. Throughout this book Gopo intimately relays her difficulties as a constant minority—African American with some East Indian heritage—often lacking cultural peers in her evolving spaces. From witnessing the acquittal of O.J. Simpson at her predominantly white high school to finding black community at Carnegie Mellon University to meeting the love of her life in Cape Town, South Africa, we are taken on a journey of self-discovery and self-acceptance.

This book is not merely reflection. It is a deeper introduction to the complex intersection of race and immigration and how these can inform one's developing sense of self. Time and time again, Patrice Gopo lives into an identity as an "other," struggling to find her fit.

"'I don't really think of you as being black,' a dear college friend once said to me," Gopo writes. "I held the phone against my ear and paused a moment as mild indignation crept through my mind. 'Of course I'm black,' I replied."

Through such deeply personal stories and conversations, we are challenged to examine our understanding of race—wherever we might place ourselves in similar scenes. Despite encountering both ignorance and blatant bigotry, Gopo offers honest insight and extends deeper grace, all the while reminding us that we can do the same. With faith as the grounding force of her narrative, Gopo writes in a generous and thought-provoking manner. While conversations involving race, immigration, and cultural identity are often tense or uncomfortable, Gopo puts us at ease with courage and eloquence.

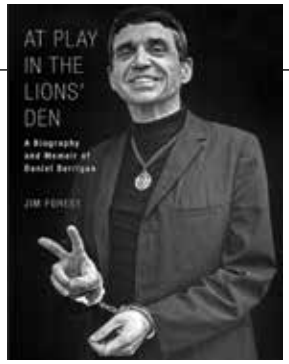
What I love most about this book is that we are not compelled to seek answers but to hear. With each chapter Gopo challenges the often-monolithic narrative surrounding black women, testifying to the colorful and expansive ways we abound. From her perspective on varying degrees of blackness to the difficulties of finding authentic community, readers are given an offering that is deeply personal and necessary.

As a young black woman, reading this book felt as intimate as perusing a dear friend's journal entries. I was invited to listen, feel, and take note of a story much like my own. And with each page, I was reminded that the intricate differences of our seemingly shared identity are worth knowing.

The framework of this story is a call to listen. In a world that often depicts difference as divisive, Gopo challenges us to find common ground: "In every person there exists an element of the past that we want to grasp. *See me, we say. I am rooted in an identifiable place. I am descended from a particular people.*"

Gopo paints a picture of redemptive community, reminding us that we have more in common than we think. We would all be better for reading this book, if not for the captivating ways it can inform our understanding of complex matters such as race, then simply for the opportunity to reimagine a world where our barriers can become defining moments of strength. ■

***Natalie Brown** is a freelance writer living in Chicago.*



Reviewed by Bill Wylie-Kellermann

AN UNBOUND **SPIRIT**

***At Play in the Lions' Den: A Biography and Memoir of Daniel Berrigan,* by Jim Forest. Orbis Books.**

WHEN DANIEL and Philip Berrigan, A.J. Muste, John Howard Yoder, and a handful of Catholic radicals gathered in 1964 with Thomas Merton at the Abbey of Gethsemani in Kentucky for a retreat concerning the spiritual roots of protest, the intercessions of that meeting, I am convinced, not only seeded a movement but summoned my vocation.

Four years later when Daniel and Phil Berrigan and seven others entered the draft board in Catonsville, Md., removed 1A files and burned them with homemade napalm, those ashes too would eventually anoint my pastoral calling. October marks the 50th anniversary of the trial of the Catonsville Nine. Released in February 1973 after 18 months in the federal penitentiary at Danbury, Conn., Daniel Berrigan came to New York and taught the Apocalypse of John when I was a student at Union Seminary. Full disclosure: He became to me not merely teacher, but mentor and friend.

In the year following Dan's death (April 30, 2016), Jim Forest undertook the heroic literary effort of writing *At Play in the Lions' Den.* Perhaps he had a running start. Three things of note up front. One is that Forest's own life is inextricably tangled with Berrigan's. He was, for example, editor of *The Catholic Worker* when Dan first appeared there, was part of the 1964 retreat with Merton, and responded to Catonsville by joining others in a draft board raid in Milwaukee within the year. So, like the Acts of the Apostles, there are whole sections of this book written in the first-person voice. Or betimes, Forest just peeks from behind the elegantly researched narrative to lend a knowing detail. This is a risky wire act. Don't fall into self-aggrandizement (his genuine modesty saves him that) or the net of hagiography. And best to name this from the start,

in the subtitle: "biography" *and* "memoir," a difficult art Forest has mastered.

Another note: Forest solicited a working circle of collaborators to share testimonies, answer questions, and comment. So the book is a veritable act of community. Okay, fuller disclosure: I was among those solicited, contributing ever so slightly to the story.

A third concerns photographs. Forest once published a pictorial life of Thomas Merton. When he republished his biography of Dorothy Day, he filled it with photos. This volume shares with those a common publisher, Robert Ellsberg of Orbis Books, and a similar commitment to the visual. Posters, banner holds, caricatured birthday invites, the *Time* magazine cover of Dan and Phil dragging the church into nonviolence by the collar, towering puppets for an underground escape, whole walls of art and loved ones, courtroom sketches, and the inevitable book covers from lauded poetry, to the resistance shelf, and finally the biblical commentaries mining Jesus and the prophets. But above all is Daniel Berrigan himself, in Frida's arms or beneath Dado's scowl, side by side with Phil, pious and well-scrubbed, pensive, mugshot, chastened or chagrined, exuberant, mid-utterance, the mic or camera in his face, free in the cuffs, the dock, the cell, laughing aloud or just about to. Always it seems there is love in his eye, and free delight.

Forest glimpses Berrigan's conversion to the gospel of nonviolence episodically. Berrigan was raised in a home where *The Catholic Worker* was present, but he didn't seem to be reading it during WWII where, in the isolation of seminary, he blessed our soldiers, Philip among them, in their cause for Christ. God certainly loves a moving target. Between the seminary and Dan's participation in another liturgical direct action, hammering swords/nuclear warheads into "plowshares" at a General Electric nuclear weapons plant near Philadelphia in 1980, were refining fires not just of movement discernment but personal transformation.

Crises were perpetual: Dan's underground sojourn; prison and the ragtag study communities; suffering the heat storm from Israel for his biting critique on behalf of Palestinians; pressing nonviolence with the Weather Underground domestically and with Ernesto Cardenal in Central America; the endless Pentagon actions—blood and ashes—with Jonah House folk.

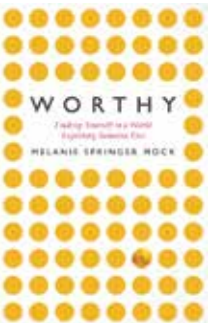
My own conversion came at Daniel's hand and word. It provoked in me a genuine crisis. He served just then as spiritual director, offering cold comfort: "You're getting born and it's bloody. It's always bloody." Wonder how he knew that? He's often named prophet or poet or priest, and rightly, but too rarely "evangelist" of nonviolence. I venture to say that his life, even again in this telling, will call more of us to radical discipleship. Deo gratias. ■

Bill Wylie-Kellermann *is a nonviolent community activist, retired pastor, and author living in Detroit. His most recent books are:* Dying Well: The Resurrected Life of Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann *(Cass Community, 2018),* Principalities in Particular: A Practical Theology of the Powers that Be, *and* Where the Waters Go Around: Beloved Detroit.

Reviewed by Cherice Bock

CLAIMING OUR TRUE **VALUE**

Worthy: Finding Yourself in a World Expecting Someone Else, **by Melanie Springer Mock. Herald Press.**



WHEN MELANIE MOCK, author of the new book *Worthy: Finding Yourself in a World Expecting Someone Else*, realized as a teen that her newly acquired designer jeans would not lead her to immediate popularity, she bumped into questions I'm sure many of us face: Where does our worth come from? How do we get to the point where we truly believe we are worthy and beloved just as we are, as the children of God? Through sometimes humorous, sometimes heartrending, and always poignantly honest stories from her own experience, Mock opens the vulnerable space within to attend to the stories we tell ourselves about our value.

Mock's stories point out the hidden messages about worthiness given to us by American culture, in particular the evangelical subculture, contrasting the messages of the "purity culture" with the biblical promises of our innate belovedness. She builds on the groundwork laid in *If Eve Only Knew: Freeing Yourself from Biblical Womanhood and Becoming All God Meant for You to Be* (Chalice Press), which she co-wrote with Kendra Weddle Irons.

While she focuses primarily on the messages given to white evangelical women, since this is her experience, she recognizes her privilege, as well as the parallels between the unhealthy and often impossible implicit standards American evangelicals hold for women, people of color, and LGBTQ+ folks, all who do not meet a white male "norm." Mock addresses how evangelical cultures tend to create double standards for women, requiring a type of "purity" that has nothing to do with Christianity. She shares honestly about the fear that even when she seems to be fitting the mold of the ideal Christian woman, at any moment the façade of the successful mother/wife/professor will be unmasked.

While Mock describes herself as "not a biblical scholar or a theologian," the author of the foreword, Carolyn Custis James, begs to differ: "This is theology at its best," theology that invites us into a deeper understanding of ourselves and God through the medium of personal story and struggle. As we thrive in our own worthiness, Mock argues that we will no longer need to break one another down to raise our own status, no longer need to fear that if people know us, they will no longer see us as valuable. Instead, by opening ourselves up to our own uniqueness and seeing through the damaging lies of the purity culture, we can see one another's intrinsic value.

Mock is very aware that structural injustice will not be solved through individual actions, addressing this in sections regarding feminism, her ambivalence around international adoptions, and her awareness of the racial injustices her adopted sons encounter. But she encourages readers to deepen their journeys of spiritual transformation through living into their own worthiness. This transformative process can give courage and hope to those working toward the Beloved Community, a more sustained way to flourish because it is not based on external affirmation but grounded firmly in experiencing the radical love of God. ■

Cherice Bock *teaches courses at Portland Seminary, is on the faculty of the Oregon Extension, and is a Ph.D. candidate in environmental studies at Antioch University New England.*

"It is what you read when you don't have to that determines what you will be when you can't help it."

—OSCAR WILDE, Irish author and playwright

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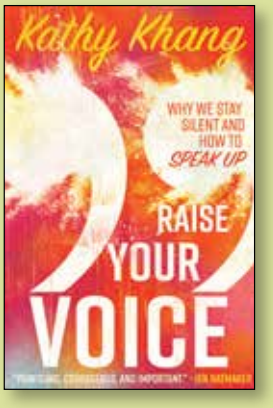

Raise Your Voice

Kathy Khang

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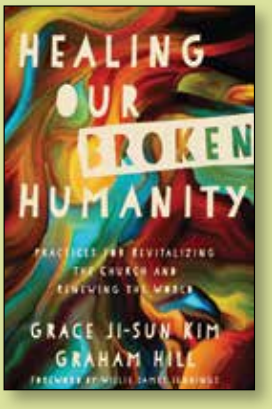

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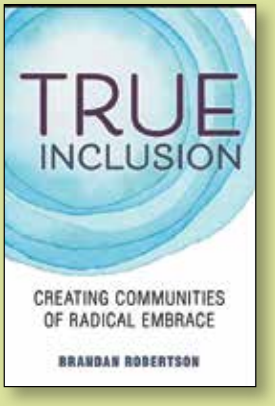

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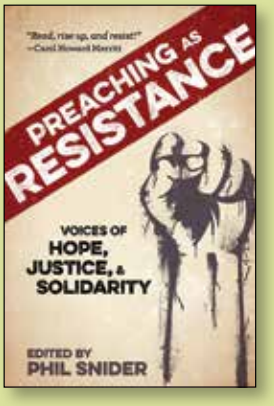

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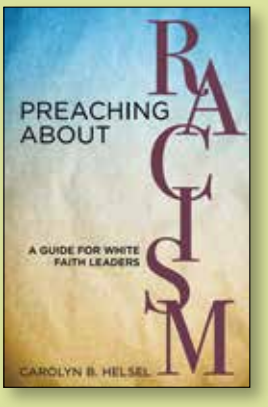

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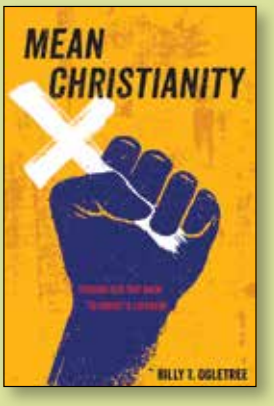

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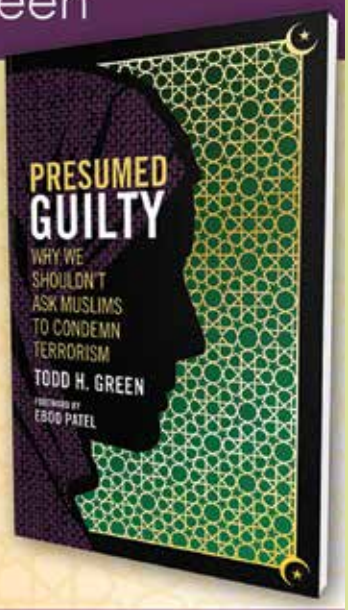

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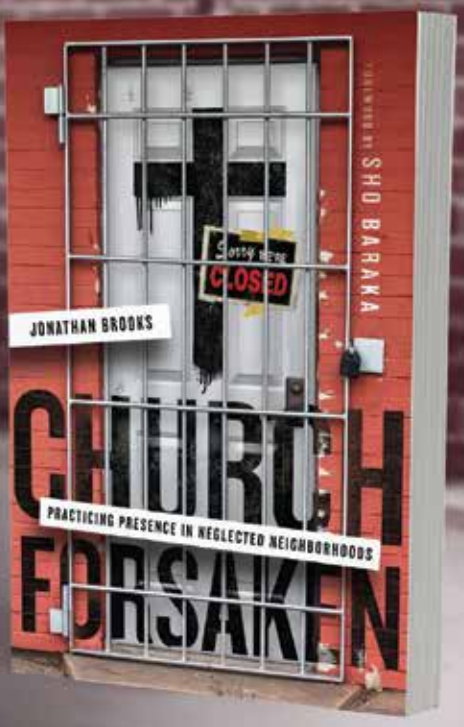

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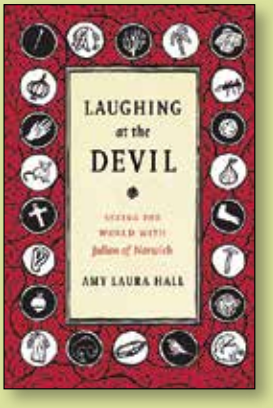

Laughing at the Devil
Amy Laura Hall

Amy Laura Hall takes up medieval mystic Julian of Norwich's call to laugh at the Devil as a means to transform a setting of dread and fear into the means to create hope, solidarity, and resistance.

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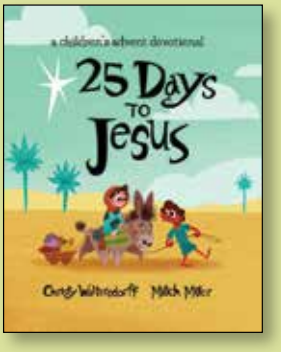

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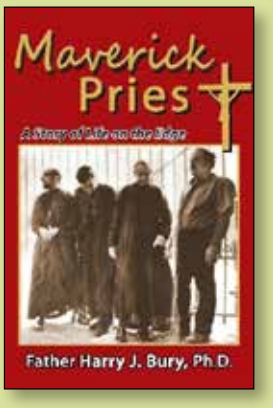

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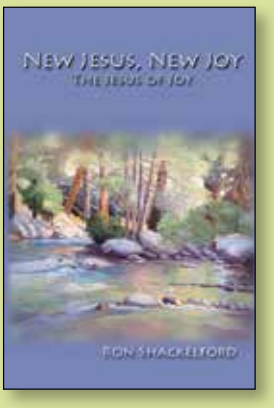

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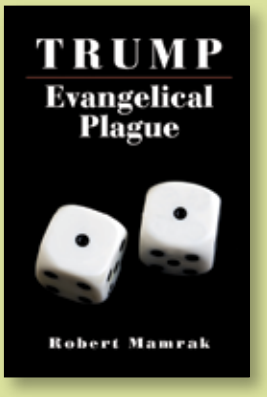

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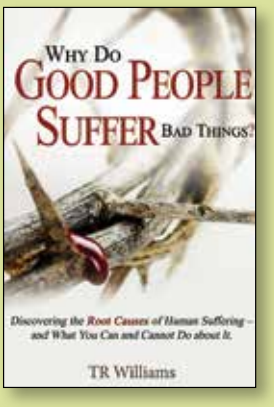

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BY PHILIP C. KOLIN

A Litany for St. Martin de Porres

On your mother's side Abyssinian slaves,
grandees from Spain on your father's.
How could someone dark
as a Dominican's cappa with a burnt
oak face and a halo of knotted hair
be the patron of holiness?
Barbering and sweeping were not
causes for sainthood.

But there was no darkness in you.
You were simply not the right color
for monastic vows, something reserved
for white faces, white souls.
Later you begged Prior Lorenzana
to sell you as a slave to support
the friars who questioned why
you prayed with your eyes
closed. You did not need to see
what you believed in.

Seared in faith and charity,
you cared for dropsical beggars,
their heads full of fever and lice,
and made your bed for them to rest in,
folding their clothes in wreaths
of rosemary and myrtle. Everyone
was welcomed in your small cell.
Even the rats there were safe.
Miraculously, you walked through locked
doors to care for plague-stricken seminarians
removed from the rest of the priory.
When you died, a radiance flooded Lima.

But segregation still haunted the church.
For three hundred years you were
a saint-in-waiting, invisible as the poor
of Peru. Even your statue was hidden
in gloomy vestibules, out of sight
of white congregations.

It took a college of 38 cardinals
and a pope to end the agony
and declare your soul a mansion
of dazzling light in the same decade
those black souls marched across a bridge
in Selma toward martyrdom in Memphis.

Philip C. Kolin *is the distinguished professor of English emeritus at the University of Southern Mississippi and editor emeritus of* The Southern Quarterly. *His most recent book is* Reaching Forever.

Digitally edited photograph, "Martin de Porres," by Jordan Hainsey.

BY PEARL MARIA BARROS

Days of Feast and Famine

NOVEMBER IS THE MONTH of remembrance and thanksgiving. It begins with the Feasts of All Saints (Nov. 1) and All Souls (Nov. 2), when Christians honor holy women and men. What does it mean to be holy? Too often, we think of holiness as an impossible task—we equate it with a scrupulous perfectionism none of us can attain. That is an easy, and spiritually immature, excuse not to ponder what holiness might mean for us. To be holy is to be one with God. As people of faith, we are *all* called to holiness. It is something that we grow into as we grow in our relationship with God, others, and ourselves.

The women and men whose names we sing in the Litany of the Saints (as well as the names of our loved ones who we might add to that litany) were not angels. They were humans, like you and me. However, we remember them because their lives witnessed to God's loving presence in our midst. We, too, are called to witness to this grace. The readings for this month remind us that becoming holy will demand much of us. It requires that we "love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our might" (Deuteronomy 6:5) and that we "love our neighbor as we love ourselves" (Mark 12:31). They also promise us that God "will show [us] the path of life" (Psalm 16:11) and "fullness of joy" as we tend to God's "kin-dom."

***Pearl Maria Barros** is an assistant professor in the religious studies department at Santa Clara (Calif.) University.*

[NOVEMBER 4]

Beware Shiny Gods

Deuteronomy 6:1-9; Psalm 119:1-8; Hebrews 9:11-14; Mark 12:28-34

OUR READINGS begin with the words of the Jewish Shema: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might" (Deuteronomy 6:4-5). Immediately, the scripture reminds us that God is to be the center of our lives. But how do we make God the center of our lives? In a world where distractions abound—where there is always some new and shiny god being launched for the low, low price of $29.99 per month—how do we love God with all our hearts, souls, and might? While the shiny false gods might be easy to identify and avoid, how do we genuinely attend to the variety of "competing goods" (as my colleague the ethicist calls them) in our lives? How do we balance time for prayer with time for family, friends, ministry, work, and self-care?

In Mark's gospel, Jesus adds on to the Shema, stating that the second great commandment is to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:31). Perhaps this is a clue as to how we can make God the center of our lives while also attending to our competing goods: Namely, we can see that God is always already at the center of those goods. After all, God is what makes them good! This does not mean that we do not commit to the discipline of prayer, but it does mean that the overall goal of prayer is to make us aware of the ever-present God in our midst. Imagine: What would that Monday morning board meeting look like if we really believed that God was present there? How about those 3 a.m. newborn feedings and endless diaper changes? Or that friend going through a divorce who just needs someone to listen? What if we really saw each of those moments, each of those people, as encounters with the living God? Perhaps then we might be able to say, "I am loving the Lord my God with all my heart, all my soul, and all my might. And I am loving my neighbor as myself."

[NOVEMBER 11]

Caring for Widows

1 Kings 17:8-16; Psalm 146; Hebrews 9:24-28; Mark 12:38-44

THE WIDOWS IN this week's reading who trust that God will provide for them are inextricably tied to our call to care for those who are marginalized in our own communities. In 1 Kings, Elijah asks a widow to share her food with him—food that she is painstakingly saving for her son and herself. She and her son are starving; this is likely their last meal since after it she claims they will "die" (1 Kings 17:12). But Elijah tells her "do not be afraid" and promises that God will provide for her, her son, and Elijah—she just needs to trust that God will turn her limitations into abundance (verse 13). She trusts, and God provides (verses 15-16). Do we trust that God will also turn our limitations into abundance? But how does God do this? The World Health Organization estimates that poor nutrition results in nearly half (45 percent) of deaths in children under age 5 each year. Why doesn't God refill their "jar of meal" and "jug of oil" (verse 16)?

Lest we think the readings for this week glorify poverty—as if prayer without action for systemic reform will end world hunger and other socioeconomic injustices—we need to pay close attention to Jesus' comments in Mark's gospel. In it, Jesus criticizes the religious elite of his time for being oblivious to the plight of the socioeconomically poor. "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets! They devour widows' houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation" (Mark 12:38-40). Jesus is clear: If we have any privileges, then we are to use them in service to the "widows" among us! While it is unlikely that we will end world hunger and poverty on our own, we should nevertheless imitate the widows in these readings: We should give everything we have, trusting that God will turn our limitations into abundance—the abundance that is collective action toward justice.

[NOVEMBER 18]

We Are New

Daniel 12:1-3; Psalm 16; Hebrews 10:11-25; Mark 13:1-8

DEATH AND salvation are prominent themes here. In Daniel, we hear that "there shall be a time of anguish, such as has never occurred since nations first came into existence" (12:1). We are also reassured that "those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever" (verse 3). Jesus talks about suffering and death as he foretells the destruction of the temple in Mark's gospel. He warns, "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birth pangs" (Mark 13: 8). Although both texts have a doomsday gloom about them, they are examples of apocalyptic literature and rhetoric that were (and are) meant to instill hope in their listeners. They remind people who are suffering and oppressed that God will not abandon them.

As the letter to the Hebrews states, "Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful" (10:23). The early Christians thought the Second Coming would happen in their lifetimes. They believed that they were living in the end times. Today, some argue that we are living in the end times. We certainly see "nation rising against nation," "earthquakes," and "famines," and some might say we are living in "a time of anguish, such as has never occurred" before. Yet these scriptures show us that, unfortunately, war, natural disasters, and anguish of all sorts have occurred before. They are not new. *We* are new. We are what has not happened before and will not happen again. The scriptures challenge us to make sure that these atrocities do not continue after us. They "show [us] the path of life" (Psalm 16:11) by urging us to push against all that devastates and destroys. Let the birthing begin.

"Preaching the Word," *Sojourners' online resource for sermon preparation and Bible study, is available at sojo.net/ptw.*

[NOVEMBER 25]

A Different Kind of King

Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14; Psalm 93; Revelation 1:4b-8; John 18:33-37

ROYALTY IS USUALLY associated with power and wealth, pomp and circumstance. Here at the closing of the liturgical year at the Feast of Christ the King, these readings make it very clear that Jesus is not that kind of king. When Pilate asks Jesus if he is "King of the Jews," Jesus responds: "'My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.' Pilate asked him, 'So you are a king?' Jesus answered, 'You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice'" (John 18:36-37).

It's easy to presume that Pilate was not satisfied with Jesus' answer; it was not from this world—the world where being a king means overpowering others rather than empowering them. Throughout his ministry and in his suffering, death, and resurrection, Jesus models for us a different way of leading. He engages the outcasts of his society, daring to recognize the presence of God in prostitutes, tax collectors, and widows. He chastises his disciples when they start arguing about which one of them is going to sit on his left and on his right—it's not about prestige, guys! He heals the sick and welcomes little children. Then he preaches about a kingdom where "the last shall be first, and the first shall be last." Not the kind of thing proclaimed by people in power who are interested in keeping their power. But Jesus proclaims this and more.

As we celebrate this reign of Christ, let us ponder how Jesus understood the "kingdom of God." As *mujerista* theologian Ada María Isasi-Díaz argues, when we consider Jesus' use of the "kingdom" metaphor, it might be helpful to see this "kingdom" more in terms of a "kin-dom." Jesus is talking about a new world, a new kinship and way of being in relationship with each other and with God. ■

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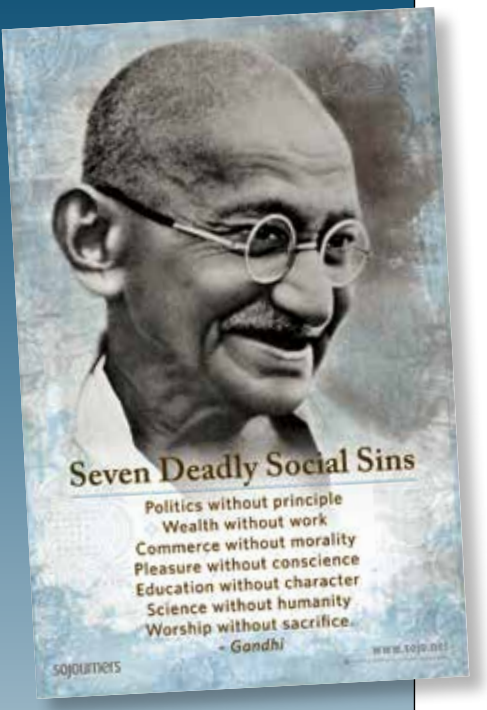

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Deep Breath...

Ken Davis

THIS IS A tough time to be an American human. We wake up each morning jittery and anxious, wondering what new outrage will cause us to reflexively fling our arms across our faces in a pointless attempt at self-defense. We are in harm's way, the nation is in jeopardy, and the axe-throwing club on my street looks like it's closing down.

You might not think this is a problem, but then you probably never threw an axe across a room and stuck it in a wooden bullseye, and then said, with shameless pride, "Yes, oh YES, I'm BAD!" Once you've thrown an axe, throwing darts in a bar just seems so unsatisfying. (Note: Axe throwing is not usually done in venues that serve alcohol, for obvious reasons.)

But few customers are showing up these days, and the hours are irregular. It's just another casualty of an America so debilitated by the state of our politics that we don't even want to get out of bed, much less pick up an axe. And I'm sure I don't have to tell you, but an axe-throwing high only lasts so long. Eventually you start remembering why you wanted to throw sharp objects in the first place:

Axe not what you can do for your country...

■ The EPA is again permitting coal companies to flush ash into West Virginia streams. (Game fish now come pre-blackened.)

■ The economy is on a sugar high that will inevitably end with a crash, followed by the government's heroic response to stimulate markets by passing more tax breaks for the rich. (It's called "Tinkle Down Economics," how prosperity gets passed on to the deserving, who should never look up during these troubled times.)

■ Endangered species are losing their protections, jeopardizing some of our most beloved animals. (Coming soon: Chick-fil-A's new Crispy Bald Eagle Wrap!)

■ Auto mileage requirements are being reduced to levels not seen since Hummers roamed the Earth.

■ A third of the country thinks the Oxford English Dictionary defines "collusion" as "there's not any" ("and even if there was, there's nothing wrong with that").

■ Russia is planning on disrupting our elections again. Terrible for us, of course, but also bad for the Russian spies who've been secretly living among us, waiting for their orders to strike at our democracy. Too late. Facebook already did that. So all they can do is remain under cover, hoping the Motherland will call. In the meantime, they signed up for snacks at their kids' school next week and that PTA auction is not going to run itself. (This year's theme: "Springtime in Vladivostok.")

■ And, despite absolutely nobody asking for it, Dunkin' Donuts has just revealed its latest product: Donut Fries. Wrong on so many levels.

IN OTHER WORDS, things are bad. So bad that I've been watching *The Handmaid's Tale* for comic relief.

In desperation, many of us are placing our hopes on the upcoming midterms. We're supposed to put our trust in God, of course, but for the next few weeks we're putting our trust in Nate Silver and his polling, which so far suggests that change may be coming. (On the other hand, he also said Hillary would win, so maybe we better stick with God.)

But is a single election really going to make a difference? Are we expecting too much from a democracy already compromised? On a recent camping trip, I looked up at the stars and began to feel the utter inconsequence of our terrestrial travails. (I love stargazing on summer nights because I can marvel at creation and nobody notices I'm wearing shorts with black socks.) The vastness of space reminded me that our corporeal anxieties are miniscule compared to a universe that is already 13 billion years old, a length of time almost inconceivable to human understanding, unless you're waiting for *Hamilton* tickets. (It's also comparable to the combined ages of Democratic congressional leaders, but I digress.)

The stars we see are light years away and, in fact, light years from each other, and it's hard to grasp such a vast emptiness. So I just imagine Mitch McConnell's lack of human empathy, then double that.

The point is, humans are barely an asterisk in the long march of time. Millennia have passed before us—a time I classify as BDF, Before Donut Fries—and millennia will follow (a time waiting for a lasting progressive judiciary or for pigs to fly, whichever comes first). So during our short time in existence, how should we make our mark?

You do what you want. I'm just going to keep throwing sharp objects. ("Hey, Sean Hannity. Catch!") ■

Ed Spivey Jr. *is art director of* Sojourners.

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